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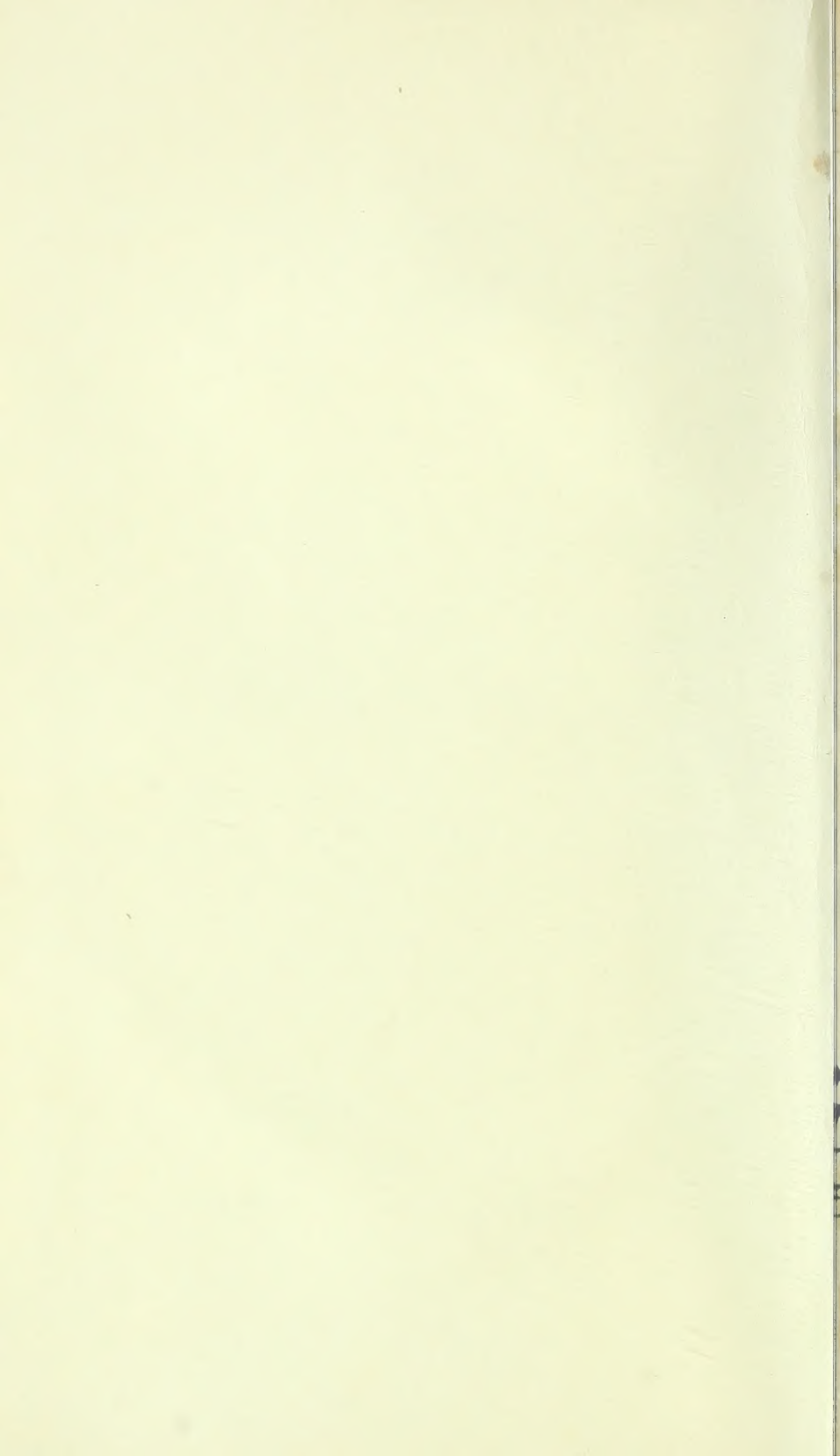


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AN  
HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL VIEW  
OF THE  
*R. S. Mosau*  
SPECULATIVE PHILOSOPHY OF EUROPE  
IN THE  
NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BY  
J. D. MORELL, A.M.

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COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

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## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

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THE author, in sending forth the present work to the public, wishes at the outset to bespeak the candor and indulgence of the reader. The subject, he is well aware, is at present of a very unpopular character ; besides which, the abstruseness of many of the details renders it vain to hope that he has succeeded in discussing them without falling into some errors and many imperfections. The work itself is not the production of an experienced writer ; it contains the first thoughts which the author has yet ventured to intrude upon public notice, and was composed in the quietude of a country life, without the aid of any mind to suggest improvements. Under these circumstances he feels that, while he is bound to speak with much modesty of his own labors, he can at the same time lay some reasonable claim to kind consideration from the critical reader.

With regard to originality, the author makes very little pretension to anything of the kind. He has used very freely the opinions and the arguments of other people ; seldom rejecting an apposite idea because it was to be found amongst the productions of some other mind. Should he only succeed in bringing *great truths and principles* before the attention of his fellow-men, he will not envy any one the first origination of them. If it may be now allowed him to lay down the stiffness of the third person, and assume the confidential ease of the first, he will detail as briefly as possible the train of circumstances which has led to the present attempt, and the purpose he has had in view in making it.

Whilst going through a systematic course of general study in London, I was induced, from a somewhat undefined idea of the importance of the subject, to take up Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding." The perusal of that immortal work seemed to open a region of surpassing grandeur ; but at the same time gave few results, upon which it was possible to rest with calmness and satisfaction. I next betook myself to the Lectures of Dr. Thomas Brown, hoping to find there the satisfaction I required. In this hope I was not *for the time* disappointed. The style was so captivating, the views so comprehensive, the arguments so acute, the whole thing so complete, that I was almost insensibly borne along upon the stream of his reasoning and his eloquence. Naturally enough I became a zealous disciple ; I accepted his mental analysis as almost



perfect ; I defended his doctrine of causation ; with him I stood in astonishment at the alleged obtuseness of Reid ; and, with the exception of his ethical system, was ready to consider “ ipse dixit ” as a valid argument for the truth of any metaphysical dogma. Induced by the lively admiration I had conceived for the Scottish metaphysics, I proceeded to the University of Glasgow, and studied philosophy in the class-rooms which had been honored by the presence and enlightened by the genius of Reid and Smith. Here the veneration for Brown began to subside ; I felt that there was a depth in the philosophy of Reid which I had not fully appreciated, and that the sensational tendency of the former, though it added popularity to his thoughts, was an ill exchange from the incipient spiritualism of the latter. Hoping to probe the questions relating to the foundation of human knowledge more to their centre, I attempted to read Kant’s “ Critick of Pure Reason,” and some few other Continental works ; but they for the most part opened a region so entirely new, that I felt quite unable to compare their results *as a whole* with those of the Scottish metaphysicians. Desirous, however, of pursuing the subject still further, I repaired to Germany ; I heard Brandis and Fichte expound German philosophy in their lecture rooms, and spent some months in reading the standard works of the great masters. The different systems, which were here contending for the preference, gradually became intelligible ; but, alas ! they stood alone—in complete isolation ; to compare their method, their procedure, their aim, their results satisfactorily with those of our English and Scottish philosophy, appeared, as yet, almost impossible. To gain light, therefore, upon these points, I turned my attention to France ; the name of eclecticism seemed too inviting to be turned away, as it often is, on the charge of syncretism or want of profundity ; and my hopes were not altogether deceptive. I found, or thought that I found, in the writings of Cousin, and others of the modern eclectics, the germs of certain great principles, upon which a comparison of all the philosophical systems of the present age could be advantageously instituted, and saw, that such a comparison would be of very important service to one, who should be anxious to travel, as I had done, over the broad field of European metaphysics. How eagerly should I have welcomed such a directory myself, while I was toiling to get some clear light upon the conflicting systems of Germany ; how highly should I have valued a simple and definite statement of the foundation principle of the different schools—how intensely rejoiced in a work which would show the relations of the one to the other ! It was with a view, therefore, of supplying the want which I had myself felt, that I began the sketch which has now swelled into these two volumes ; and it is in the hope that it may afford to others what I myself vainly sought for, that it is now ushered with all its imperfections before the public.

The plan of the work, as a whole, may be stated in very few words. First, I have attempted to explain and illustrate the general idea of philosophy, and to deduce the fundamental notions from which it springs. Having grasped the idea of philosophy *generally*, I attempt next to point out the different views which have been entertained of its details; in other words, to classify the different *systems* which have been in vogue, more or less, in every age of the world. Having obtained four great generic systems as the result of this classification, I have endeavored, in the first part of my plan, to trace their history from the revival of letters to the opening of the nineteenth century; in the second part, to follow up that history more minutely to the present age; and in the third part, to discover their tendencies as it respects the future.

I would beg leave, further, to make one or two remarks on the *phraseology* which I have found it necessary to employ, and to which some, perhaps, might be inclined to make objection. There are four expressions which occupy a very prominent place throughout the whole work, and those are—sensationalism, idealism, scepticism, and mysticism. Now of these four, the first, I believe, is a word entirely new, and, therefore, demands some apology for its introduction. For some time I used the term sensualism, adopting it literally from the French philosophy; but the associations which that expression has with what is *morally* vicious was so strong, that I was soon induced to abandon it altogether. Next, I thought of sensism and sensationism, as being terms well adapted to describe the philosophy which builds itself up upon sense, or sensation; but these seemed to fail in respect to taste and euphony. Lastly, I adopted the term sensationalism, as being at the same time more in accordance with the analogy of our language, and more euphonious to the ear.

With this explanation, I trust no further apology will be considered necessary, for the liberty here taken, of coining a new term. Had an old one been in existence, it would certainly have been employed in preference. The next term I mentioned above was *idealism*; and this also required no little consideration ere it was adopted. The term rationalism would certainly have been better adapted to express a philosophy starting from conceptions of reason, rather than intimations of sense; but then it has acquired such notoriety in the religious world, that I well knew the penalty of pressing it into my service. On the whole, therefore, as the term *idea* is now very frequently used to signify a mental conception, in opposition to a sensational feeling, I thought it not inappropriate to apply the word *idealism*, in the general sense in which it is found in the following pages. The terms scepticism and mysticism need no comment; they are used in their ordinary philosophical sense, and only require to be accompanied by the single caution, that they be not understood on any occasion, in their peculiarly theological acceptance. With regard to such terms as philosophy, metaphysics, science, &c., I have



not employed them in any peculiar and distinctive signification. I have preferred their loose popular use, as being more adapted to an historical inquiry; and trust that, wherever they are employed *distinctively*, the meaning intended to be conveyed will be clearly pointed out by the connection, or some qualifying adjunct to the words themselves.

With regard to that portion of the work which relates to the German philosophy, I think it due to myself to remind the reader of the extreme difficulty there is in setting forth these German ideas in an English dress. The mere translation of any of the writings of Hegel or Schelling, or even of Kant himself, into English, would prove entirely unintelligible to the mass of English readers. The only method of adapting their philosophy to the English mind, is, to master their ideas, and then, having thrown all books on one side, to attempt a reproduction of them, in our own style and language. How far I have succeeded in doing this, it is not for me to judge; but I can only express my conviction, that by due reflection, the whole of what is really valuable in the German metaphysics, might be made just as comprehensible to all ordinary philosophical minds, in English, as it is in any other language whatever.

The only point to which I would further allude is, to the marks of rapidity and brevity, which the reader may notice, in discussing some of the most important systems which come before us. The fact is, that I intended, at first, simply to compile a manual, in one volume; when I found, accordingly, that the matter increased rapidly upon my hands, I constantly wrote under the desire of *compression*; and it was not till the work was more than half completed, that I found it necessary to enlarge my original plan. The first three chapters must, at any rate, have given but a very rapid glance at the subjects there treated of; the intention of them being simply to prepare the way for a right estimate of philosophy in the present century. In the other part of the work, however, sufficient, I trust, has been written, to give a full portraiture of the principles upon which every separate school is founded.

The mature philosopher, moreover, will doubtless feel a want of depth in the discussion of some of the great points which our criticism involves. It must be remembered, however, that I have not written so much for philosophers as for the mass of educated and thinking minds in our country. With this view, I have, in many instances, thought it right and useful, somewhat to sacrifice depth and fulness of research to the desire for clearness and popularity.

Should the present attempt meet with a favorable reception, I shall consider it a sufficient inducement to go on in the effort I have commenced, of bringing the great questions respecting the grounds and validity of human knowledge, respecting the laws of thought, and respecting the history of their scientific development, before the public. Sure I am, that the mechanical tendency of the age is fast wearing itself

out, and that the current of philosophical investigation will soon begin to flow towards the elucidation of human nature, in its individual and in its social capacity. In such investigations, the history of thought will afford some of the principal data on which to work. Should the present manual only draw attention to the importance of the subject, and lead any other minds to direct their energies to it, I shall not fear that my labor will ultimately prove to be in vain.



## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN offering to the public a second and enlarged edition of the present work, there are some few explanations into which I feel it requisite to enter. The distinct object I had in view, in the first composition of the work, was to make an unpopular subject as clear and interesting as possible. I expressly stated, in the preface to the first edition, that I had not written for the *scientific*; but that, impressed with the importance of philosophical truth generally, I had endeavored to make its chief problems accessible to the mass of educated and thinking minds.

I did not *then* realize, on the one hand, the probability, or even the possibility, that this feature of my plan, which was regarded by me as its chief utility, could be seized upon as the ground either of objection or attack. On the other hand, I did not give credit to the British public at large, for sufficient interest in the abstruser questions of philosophy, either to render a more full discussion of them necessary, or to make any copious references to foreign and other authorities desirable. In this opinion, I am glad to find I was deceived.

In order, therefore, at once to turn aside the imputations of the hypercritical and to supply the wants of those who may be emulous of advancing onwards in the pathway of philosophy, I have thought it right to offer my former work to the public in an improved, and more legitimately historical form.\*

The additions now made may be easily enumerated. First, the notes at the foot of the page are intended to furnish somewhat fuller historical

\* One word with regard to reviews. Upon those which have taken up the questions with vigor and intelligence, I have made some remarks in the notes and appendix, whenever I thought the objections demanded attention. To those who have attempted to argue against philosophy, without understanding anything about it; or have undertaken to refute the writers of France and Germany, while they evidently have never read through a philosophical work in either language, I have not thought it worth the trouble to reply.

information, wherever it seemed requisite, respecting the authors whose opinions are described, and to point out the portions of their works, in which the more important features of their respective systems are contained. Secondly, this distinctive reference to the works in question, has, in many instances, demanded a more distinctive and detailed description of the systems themselves in the text. Some of the articles, indeed, have been entirely re-written; others have been considerably enlarged; while all have been carefully revised.

Thirdly, a considerable quantity of matter in the present edition is entirely new, not only with regard to the *treatment* of the subjects, but with regard to the subjects themselves. This new matter refers chiefly to authors and systems, of which no previous mention was made, but of which, for the sake of historical completeness, I have thought it right to give some distinct account. Moreover, in the conclusion and appendix, there will be found a somewhat fuller development of the author's views, on some points connected with the method of philosophical investigation, and the grounds of natural theology.

With regard to the philosophical doctrines which are advocated, I am not aware that these are, in any respect, modified; the revision being entirely confined, either to the more precise expression of the ideas themselves, or to the correction of some minor, chiefly historical, errors, which had before unwittingly crept into the text. There is one point only, on which I am desirous of making a few remarks, and that is on the subject of Locke and his philosophy.

The real sentiments of the "Essay on the Human Understanding" have long been, and to all appearance are long likely to be, a disputed point between metaphysicians of different schools. It is, at once, instructive and amusing to read the various comments which have been called forth upon this topic. On the one hand, I have been taken to task, by no mean authority, for favoring Locke's sensualism *too much*, and not exposing its bitter and baneful consequences. On the other hand, I have been just as severely criticized, for *not* doing justice to our great countryman. By one party, that, namely, professing extreme sensationalism, Locke has been claimed as an unconditional supporter of their peculiar views; while, by another party, it is admitted, that the *philosophy* I have maintained, is correct; but it is affirmed that Locke's philosophy is precisely the same!

The most obvious conclusion we must draw from these phenomena, is—that whatever be Locke's views, they are not very easy to come at; that whether it be from want of precision in the style, or whether from a want of uniformity in the opinions, the Essay is such, upon the whole, as to lead different minds to very opposite conclusions. It cannot be denied that both parties have much to say for themselves, and that they can each bring an array of passages from different portions of the



Essay, which appear to establish conclusively their several hypotheses. Under these circumstances, the only course remaining, is to look to the spirit which breathes through the entire work, and to estimate, in this way, its general bearing. I am still of the same opinion as ever, that any one honestly and intelligently following this course, would class Locke midway between the philosophy which finds a distinct and *a priori* source of ideas in the reason, and that which makes sensation the generating principle of all our mental activity. That he maintains the existence of *active faculties*, without which we could not possess any of the so-termed "ideas of reflection," no one, as I before showed, can for a moment deny; but to suppose that these faculties involve anything more than a mere formal and logical mechanism, or have any real *material* to act upon, except that which is furnished by the senses, appears to me to be contrary to the spirit of Locke's whole polemic against innate ideas; as it was also to that of Kant's "Critick of Pure Reason." The charge of having viewed Locke, *simply* through foreign authorities, I utterly disclaim. His Essay was my first companion in philosophy, and I studied it throughout, long before I ever opened a single work of any French or German writer. The reason I have followed, *in the main*, Cousin's criticisms, is, primarily, because I considered them very near the truth; and, secondly, because they present the subject in a form best calculated for giving a popular view of the whole question.

In admiration of Locke as a man and a thinker, I yield to none, even of his warmest partisans. So long as integrity in moral principle, firmness in purpose, practical vigor of intellect, and sincerity in religious profession, are admired in the genuine English character, will Locke ever stand forth as one of its noblest examples. But it must be abundantly evident to every mind, (except perhaps to those which are cast in his own mould,) that Locke belongs to that class of thinkers, who live more amongst the forms and definitions of logical ideas, than to those who seek direct intuitions of higher truth; that he seldom or never transcends the region of the understanding, to gaze upon the conceptions which are only accessible to the pure reason. With those who deny this distinction in mental character, I have little or no expectation of coming to any adjustment upon the philosophy of our great countryman. And, therefore, I anticipate, that so long as the two great schools of sensationalism and idealism last, the contest will be ever renewed and never concluded. I only express the hope, that the future combatants will avoid that unhappy dogmatism, which always arises from sheer incapacity of seeing beyond one's own system; and that instead of bolstering up their particular view, by casting gratuitous imputations on the sense or honesty of their opponents, (which, be it remembered, are retorted as easily as made,) they will learn that truth may be gazed on from many

different points of view, each of which may have its advantages as well as its defects.\*

The rapid sale of the former edition of this work, has given a decisive proof that the interest felt in philosophy in our own country, is far from being inconsiderable. To the hope that the present attempt may foster the love for subjects which are of such vast importance in the political, moral, and religious development of every people, the present improved edition is now consecrated.

\* To express more fully what I mean, by numbering Locke amongst logical, rather than intuitional thinkers, I cannot avoid quoting a parallel which has been drawn by a writer of no mean abilities between the genius of Locke and that of William Penn. "Locke, like William Penn, was tolerant; both loved freedom, both cherished truth in sincerity. But Locke kindled the torch of liberty at the fires of tradition; Penn at the living light in the soul. Locke sought truth through the senses and the outward world; Penn looked inward to the Divine revelations in every mind. Locke compared the soul to a sheet of white paper, just as Hobbes had compared it to a slate, on which time and chance might scrawl their experience; to Penn, the soul was an organ which of itself instinctively breathes Divine harmonies, like those musical instruments which are so curiously and perfectly framed, that, when once put in motion, they of themselves give forth all the melodies designed by the artist that made them. To Locke, 'Conscience is nothing else than our own opinion of our own actions;' to Penn it is the image of God and his oracle in the soul. Locke, who was never a father, esteemed 'the duty of parents to preserve their children not to be understood without reward and punishment;' Penn loved his children with not a thought for the consequences. Locke, who was never married, declares marriage an affair of the senses; Penn revered woman as the object of fervent, inward affection, made, not for lust, but for love. In studying the understanding, Locke begins with the sources of knowledge; Penn with an inventory of our intellectual treasures. Locke deduces government from Noah and Adam, rests it upon contract, and announces its end to be the security of property; Penn, far from going back to Adam, or even to Noah, declares 'that there must be a people before a government,' and, deducing the right to institute government from man's moral nature, seeks its fundamental rules in the immutable dictates of 'universal reason,' its end in freedom and happiness. The system of Locke lends itself to contending factions of the most opposite interests and purposes; the doctrine of Fox and Penn, being but the common creed of humanity, forbids division, and insures the highest moral unity. To Locke, happiness is pleasure; things are good and evil only in reference to pleasure and pain; and to inquire after the highest good, is as absurd as to dispute whether the best relish be in 'apples, plums, or nuts;' Penn esteemed happiness to lie in the subjection of the baser instincts, to the instinct of Deity in the breast, good and evil to be eternally and always as unlike as truth and falsehood, and the inquiry after the highest good to involve the purpose of existence. Locke says plainly, 'that, but for rewards and punishments beyond the grave, it is *certainly right* to eat, drink, and enjoy what we delight in;' Penn, like Plato and Fenelon, maintained the doctrine so terrible to despots, that God is to be loved for his own sake, and virtue to be practised for its intrinsic loveliness. Locke derives the idea of infinity from the senses, describes it as purely negative, and attributes it to nothing but space, duration, and number; Penn derived the idea from the soul, and ascribed it to truth, and virtue, and God. Locke declares immortality a matter with which reason has nothing to do, and that revealed truth must be sustained by outward signs and visible acts of power; Penn saw truth by its own light, and summoned the soul to bear witness to its own glory. Locke believed not so many men in wrong opinions as is commonly supposed, because the greatest part have no opinions at all, and do not know what they contend for; Penn likewise vindicated the many, but it was because truth is the common inheritance of the race. Locke, in his love of tolerance, inveighed against the methods of persecution as 'Popish practices;' Penn censured no sect, but condemned bigotry of all sorts as inhuman."—BANCROFT'S *History of the United States*.

GLoucester Crescent, Regent's Park, May 2, 1847.

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# INTRODUCTION.

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## SECT. I.—PHILOSOPHY EXPLAINED.

EVERYTHING that is brought into existence must have a *final cause*. The final cause of man's intellectual faculties is *to know*, and the material of knowledge is *truth*. The search after truth, therefore, is the natural sphere of our mental activity, and *philosophy* (which is the name we give to this process when it is carried on with intelligence and design) is at once a real want, and a necessary product of the human mind.

The process of knowing, however, is a very gradual one. The infant mind appears first to exist in a state of bare receptivity. The first intellectual impulse that manifests itself, is simply the desire of receiving impressions, which pour in upon it from every side, with the greatest possible intensity. As the mind develops, these impressions are remembered, compared, and classified; so that, on our emerging from the cloud of our infancy, we find that we have been spontaneously active in gaining an extensive acquaintance with the phenomena of what we term the external world. This spontaneous activity, therefore, we find has even thus early given us a practical knowledge of outward things, in many of the relations which they hold to ourselves and to each other; and the result of advancing years and continued experience is, in ordinary cases, simply to afford us the means of a wider observation, of a more extensive comparison, and of a more complete classification of them.

This knowledge of *phenomena* (of things as they seem) is sufficient for all the practical wants of human life; and the mass of mankind are content to confine their observation to them alone, without any inquiry respecting their real nature, the mode of their subsistence, or the medium by which the mind perceives them.

The life of men, therefore, who are thus conversant about phenomena only, we term *spontaneous*. Their mind, stimulated by the external world, exercises its faculties without being *reflectively* conscious of a single mental operation; impressions and ideas exist, but it is never asked how, or why, they exist; mental operations are carried on, but it is never surmised in what manner they are carried on; knowledge is gained, but no inquiry is raised about the grounds or certainty of it; thought, in a word, goes forth, but it never returns to render account of itself, or to inquire how it has been produced, or how far it is of any value, as being an accurate reflection of the truth of things *as they are*.

Whilst, however, the spontaneous life has ever been that of the mass of mankind, there always have been minds that could not content themselves with knowing only the world of outward phenomena. Their mental activity having first gone forth to grasp the varied forms of the outward world, returned back, when it had accomplished this purpose, to inquire how the process had been managed, what were the powers of mind employed, and what confidence there is to be placed in the result. This process is what is properly termed *reflection*; and the reflective life, accordingly, is that which attempts to render a true account of the spontaneous life of man. The first man that *reflected* was the first speculative philosopher,—the first time that ever thought returned to inquire into itself and arrest its own trains, was the commencement of intellectual philosophy; and once commenced, it was inevitable that philosophy should continue as long as a problem was left in the mental or moral world to be solved. The primary efforts of reason to get at the ground principles of human knowledge were naturally weak and imperfect; but as reflection progressed the path became clearer, until some one individual of more than ordinary reflective power arrived, as he considered, at a solution of the main problems of human life, and sent it forth as such into the world. This was the first *system* of philosophy; and as successive attempts to do the same thing have differed in respect to their principles, their method, their extent, and their results, so they have given rise to the different *systems* of philosophy, which have been thrown up to the light of day by the ever-flowing tide of human thought, and the ever-restless striving of the human reason.

Philosophy has been variously defined. By some it is termed “the science of the absolute and universal;” by others, it is viewed as that which is to explain the *principles* and *causes* of all things;

whilst others, again, denominate it that branch of human knowledge which is conversant with abstract and necessary truth.\* All these definitions, and many others which might be mentioned, amount, in fact, very nearly to the same thing. If it were necessary to make the idea of philosophy still clearer, perhaps we might say that it is the science of *realities* in opposition to that of mere appearances,—the attempt to comprehend things as they *are*, rather than as they *seem*. Starting originally from phenomena, internal and external, it seeks to discover what reality there is beneath them, what is the law of their development, and what the ground of their existence. Thus, if it treat of the subjective world, it inquires into the nature and validity of our faculties, into the true foundation of our knowledge and faith; if, on the other hand, it treat of the objective world, it strives to look through the outward appearance of things, and comprehend the essence by which they are upheld; having done this, it next seeks to determine the connection that subsists between subject and object, and the common origin from which they both proceed. In carrying on this process of inquiry, the human mind can never content itself with a superstructure of knowledge which is either uncertain in its foundations or imperfect in any of its parts; accordingly the philosophic spirit, when once begun, ever strives after a perfected system, in which every phenomenon within or around it shall be accounted for, and every problem analyzed and solved. The history of the continued progress of this attempt to unfold abstract and fundamental truth, is the history of philosophy; the different systems are but different movements of the whole process, and the united sum of such truth which now exists in the world is the fruit of philosophy up to the present time.

## SECT. II.—*Objections Answered.*

Philosophy (regarded in the light in which we have placed it, as the striving of man's reason to comprehend the great problems of the world within and the world without, to probe their real nature

\* Tennemann defines philosophy as "Wissenschaft der letzten Gründe und Gesetze der Natur und Freiheit, so wie ihres Verhältnisses zu einander." *Vid.* Grundriss der Ges. der Phil. p. 2.

For a perspicuous explanation of the idea of Philosophy, *vid.* "Manuel de Philosophie," par MM. Jaques, Simon, and Saisset. p. 5, *et seq.*

The following definition has been suggested to me as comprehending every essential point—"Philosophy is the science which reduces all things to the region of pure Ideas—and then traces their connection and unity."

and assign their true origin) has often met with no little opposition, and even contempt, as being either in the nature of things an impossibility, or if not impossible, yet, at least, altogether, fruitless. It may be proper, therefore, to notice the principal forms in which one or other of these objections have been brought forward, and to weigh their validity.

I. It has often been urged that our possible knowledge is confined to phenomena, which come to us primarily through the senses, arranged and modified as the case may be by subsequent reflection; that all we have to do, accordingly, is to investigate and interpret *nature*; that this has acknowledgedly led, and may still lead us, to splendid results; but that when we step beyond the observance and classification of sensible phenomena, so far from getting at any deeper results, we are going away from the beat of human knowledge altogether, into absolute darkness and uncertainty.\* To this, however, the metaphysician replies,—that, however correct such a view of things may seem to the mere naturalist, yet it is impossible for the human reason as a whole abruptly to stop at the limits of mere observation, and rest satisfied with the results it affords without striving or desiring to advance beyond them. And if it be asked, why it is impossible for us to rest satisfied when the mind has done its best in making observations and classifying them; there are many reasons that at once present themselves in reply. First, how do we know that our observations are correct? what is the ground of our confidence in our own sensations? are we quite certain that the representations of external things within our own minds, is a correct delineation of the truth of things without? Of many of our sensations we become convinced, by a very little reflection, that they cannot possibly have any external reality answering to them. Colors, for example, arise from the separation of the rays of light, and sounds are produced by pulsations of the air; but will any one assert that anything external exists at all similar to the impression of colors or sounds which we experience within? Where, again, is the outward reality to which the inward sensations of bitter and sweet correctly answer? It is true that such sensations may prove to us the existence of some powers of nature out of ourselves; but is equally true that

\* This objection was practically exhibited in the spirit of the French Encyclopædia in the last century. In the present century it has been reiterated by the advocates of the *positive* philosophy. *Vid.* “Cours de Philosophie positive”—par Auguste Comte. See also the same explained in a pamphlet by M. Littré—“De la Philosophie positive.” For a further account of this system, the reader is referred to Section ii., Chapter IV.



what we perceive is simply our own relation to these powers, that all we can directly observe in each case is our own subjective state, and that whatever these arrangements of nature may be *in themselves* separate from our own feeling, they are to us wholly unknown. And if this be the case with *some* of our sensations, why, it might be argued, may it not be so with *all*? If, for example, I *see* an external object, what do I perceive directly but my own subjective state, and where is the proof that this subjective state is a perfect exemplar or pattern of the outward reality? Is there any ground of certainty on this point, or is there not? In either case philosophy is necessary, on the one hand to show the ground of the certainty, if there be any,—on the other, to prove to us that there is none, and thus to fix the *limits* of human knowledge; and show where we must begin to rest upon a simple and undemonstrable belief.

But the metaphysician goes a step further in his reply. You outward observers, he says, it is true, collect together many facts of a diversified and interesting character, and deduce many empirical laws, but what is the nature of this knowledge? You know after all only passing phenomena, objects that are ever liable to change. The knowledge of *single* things, and mere empirical laws, however great in extent, is no *real* knowledge at all, for they may all pass away, or alter their relations; and then what *was* knowledge becomes error. I want to know if there is not such a thing as *absolute* knowledge,—whether there is not truth that must be ever and unchangeably truth,—whether there is not an immutable basis behind all this multiplicity of contingent phenomena; whether I cannot find something that is *necessary*, and which will serve as a foundation, on which to erect a system of real and unalterable science. If there be such absolute truth, it must be elicited by philosophical thinking; if there be *not*, then philosophy is equally necessary to convince me that I can have no knowledge beyond what is contingent,—that is, that I can have no knowledge which may not at some future time be error and delusion.

So far the metaphysician answers the objection of the mere outward observer, even upon his own principle, "That all our possible knowledge is confined to the perception and subsequent classification of phenomena." But now, after having shown that, even in that case, there is need of employing speculative philosophy in order to investigate the validity of these phenomena, he comes to

the principle itself, and asks, Is it veritably a true one? Is there *really* no other source of ideas beside sensations, modified as they may be by subsequent reflection? In other words, is there no other source besides experience? Should any one assert this, then we ask, *what is experience?* Experience cannot result from mere isolated perceptions, for in that case the consciousness of one moment could have no reference to that of another. In all experience a *subject* is implied as well as an *object*; the multiplicity of our perceptions is all referred to one individual mind, by which the whole inference they convey is gathered up, and which remains ever essentially *the same*, although it may be subject to an infinity of changes. Whence, then, does this notion of *self* arise? How does the first idea of it come to us? Not from experience; for we have just seen that it virtually exists before experience is possible. It must arise, therefore, from some prior source, and if so, furnishes us at least with one idea, for the matter of which we are not indebted to our sensational faculty. And if the fact of experience points us to some idea previously existing in the mind, so likewise equally does the whole phenomenon of thought or reflection. There is a unity in thought. If we search our own consciousness, we find that however varied thought may be, however many rays it may send forth in all directions, yet they all coincide in one point, all emanating from a thinking self, which is eternally the same undivided and indivisible Being. But whence comes the notion of this unity which we term self? Not from mere reflection; for all reflection supposes it. We are obliged, therefore, to look about for some other origin of ideas until this matter shall be cleared up; and it cannot be cleared up without the application of philosophy.

But if the objector is not satisfied with this refutation of his principle, the metaphysician goes on to adduce other ideas, and those of no little practical moment, which he feels equally inclined to remove from the whole province of sensible phenomena, however much they may be refined or generalized by after reflection. Whence, for example, come the notions of right and wrong? Twist them about as you will, and tell me by which of the five senses the first elements of these notions come into the mind. If they, indeed, do come from reflection upon outward phenomena, it can only be from the observation that one course of conduct produces painful effects, and another pleasing ones; that right and wrong, therefore, are other terms for useful and injurious; that

virtue is another name for utility, justice for convenience, and conscience a balancing of advantage and disadvantage :—a grave conclusion assuredly, and one that lies at the foundation of our practical life, one, therefore, which we ought not very readily to admit, unless it be proved on very clear and philosophical grounds. Forth, then, with your philosophy to give us satisfaction. Whence again arises the notion of causation? If we appeal to our senses we can see, it is true, that one action uniformly follows another, and that one set of circumstances uniformly follows another set, as far at least as our own experience goes. But if that is a sufficient account of our notion of causation, what right have we to take for granted that a cause exists at all in cases where our senses give us no assistance, and which lie beyond the beat of our own personal experience? What, then, becomes of the great argument from final causes, on which mainly rests our confidence in the being of a God? Why should we infer the existence of a supreme *power*, the creator and sustainer of all things, if the idea of causation contains no motion of power whatever, and is made to rest simply on the faith of what we experience through the medium of sense alone? The objection, accordingly, which is thus urged against philosophical investigation may, if pushed to its full extent, become fatal to the groundwork both of morality and religion; at any rate, the duty lies upon the objector to show that it is not so; and in order to show that, he must enter into the metaphysical discussion which the whole question involves. We might adduce many other ideas, such as those of space, of time, of substance, of infinity, as well as some of the primary conceptions of mathematical truth, all of which carry with them the same appearance of belonging to a class of notions quite beyond the region of mere phenomena; those, however, which we have already mentioned, may be sufficient for our present purpose.

But, lastly, the advocate of plain "common sense," says to the philosopher, You are no better off than we, after all; for you, too, are obliged to fall back upon *faith* in the end, and are equally unable with ourselves to give demonstration for everything that you hold true. Assuredly, is the reply. Certain ultimate truths there must be from which all reasoning takes its rise; but the question is, which *are* ultimate truths and which are *not*? We all try to find demonstration as far as it is possible to do so; and as soon as it fails us, there we begin to assume first principles, and trust to the authority of some primary belief. But the great point to be

shall  
Indirect  
cause



decided is, where are we to fix the *proper* boundary between the two? Where does demonstration really terminate, and the legitimate region of faith begin? The child trusts to faith for almost everything. As the reason strengthens and becomes more active, our childhood's belief begins to give way to knowledge admitted on its proper evidence; and just in proportion to the vigor of our understanding may we move backwards the landmark between demonstration and faith, and include in the former what before lay in the province of the latter. The metaphysician understands the demonstration of everything that the man of mere physical investigation holds true, but he wants to move the boundary a little further back, to see whether he cannot demonstrate what is usually taken for granted; and if he cannot demonstrate it, yet he will at least know what can be considered as proved, and what must be taken simply on the ground of its being a primary belief. Thousand to one, says Lessing, the goal of your philosophy will be the spot where you become weary of thinking any further,—a remark which should caution us not to be too hasty in inderdicting any branch of investigation as transcending our faculties, and not to fix the boundaries of demonstrative knowledge without very sufficient grounds.

II. A second objection and prejudice against all philosophical investigation is taken from the alleged fact, that the deepest thinkers on these subjects come to different, yea, even to diametrically opposite conclusions,

The sure and steady march of the mathematical sciences is pointed out as the model of what the fruits of metaphysical philosophy ought to be, if it were a genuine branch of human knowledge. The fact, therefore, that such a steady progression is not found, but that contradictions appear to be ever multiplied as speculation goes on, is taken as an argument against the whole range of metaphysical inquiry.\*

That those which are termed the accurate sciences offer a peculiar facility for investigation, and are removed almost entirely beyond the reach of errors and contradictions, arises from their very nature; such, however, it must be remembered, is by no means the case with any other of the acknowledgedly genuine branches of human knowledge. In politics, for example, men of the greatest sagacity follow completely opposite theories as to what is, in the main, most conducive to a nation's prosperity; but should we

\* This is another plea frequently urged by the "positive" school.

therefore interdict the whole science of legislation and political economy as being without any ground of certainty, and utterly fruitless in its results? Is it not clear, on the contrary, that these differences of opinion are but the very means and movements, by which the science as a whole progresses? Or, to take another illustration which may be within the reach of every one's personal experience, are there not many different forms of Christianity built upon the common data, on the ground of which we all alike receive its *general* authenticity? Have there not ever been contending parties and opposite conclusions, and do we infer from thence that the whole system is untrue, and that no certainty can possibly be arrived at, amidst the clashing opinions to which even the greatest minds are exposed? Far from it. Discussion is the very bulwark of truth—the only safeguard against the imperfection of the human mind—the only chastiser of extravagance—the only antagonist of dogmatism—the only handpost that points us perpetually along the path of moderation, which is most commonly the path of truth. The little mind that looks upon contending sects around is scandalized, and says with Pilate in a jest, "What is truth?" without ever intending to listen for a reply; but the more expanded intellect sees in these same the strugglings of human thought, by which it will gradually yet surely unfold the whole great system of religious truth from the germs that lie before it in the Word, or around it in the world.

The same principle applies to the case of speculative philosophy. In all researches so recondite in their nature, and so wide and all-embracing in their extent, it was inevitable that one mind should follow out one branch, pushing its conclusions in that direction to their furthest limit; and that another mind, starting from a different point of view and going to the same extreme on the opposite side, should evolve conclusions that appear to be altogether contradictory. The man, therefore, who throws himself into the stream of one particular system of opinions, and thinks to exhaust all human knowledge by that means, is sure in the end to suffer for his error by having his faith shaken in the results of all philosophical research; and then a shallow, unthinking "common sense" is by no means unwilling to take the alarm, and enstamp all philosophy as a vain and useless jangle of words, to which it is very uncertain whether or not any true idea can be attached. The more enlarged mind, however, sees that in each particular philosophical tendency an additional step is taken along the road of human

knowledge, all the error of which will, in time, be exploded by some opposite school, while the real substantial truth will remain. Analysis is the great instrument of all human investigation ; and analysis, to be scrutinizing and severe, must be confined to one point at a time. Select, then, your point—single it out from the whole superstructure of truth—bend upon it the whole of your analytical force ; and then what is the inevitable result ? We answer—truth and error combined. Error there must be more or less, from the isolation which is made of this one particular point from all its necessary relations ; but this error is only an unavoidable step for the further discovery of truth, because the analysis of every individual question is the more accurate in proportion as the whole mind is absorbed in it alone, to the exclusion of every other. Every school of philosophy, then, may be regarded as the analysis of one particular branch of philosophical truth ; and it only requires a subsequent synthesis to put together the combined result of the different systems, in order to show what has been the net increase they have brought to the whole mass of human knowledge. To sober and earnest minds there is no such thing as *positive* error. To such all error is negative ; it is a falling short of the fact of the case, it consists in isolation and incompleteness ; so that all analysis may be said to result in positive and negative conclusions, in plus and minus quantities ; and synthesis is the process by which the whole is summed up and the final amount determined.\*

Now, if we look back steadfastly upon the past history of philosophy, we may see that it has ever had a progressive development, that each age has contributed its portion, greater or less, and that the agitation between the different schools has been, as it were, the pulsations of this forward movement. Thales and Pythagoras combined the vague theories of their age into their own respective systems. Without the former, Democritus and the Atomists would have been impossible ; and without the latter, Parmenides and Zeno had never embodied in regular form the tenets of the Eleatic philosophy. The struggles of these two schools paved the way for Socrates, and thus rendered both Plato and Aristotle possible. Without the former of these, the early Christian philosophy would not have seen the light ; and without the latter, the scholastic philosophy could not possibly have arisen. But for the practical fruitlessness

\* Every *finite* mind is necessarily involved in negative error to a certain extent, from the very fact of its imperfection. So, likewise, all the errors of honest thinkers arise from a false or a depressed stand-point ; they are errors of *incompleteness in thinking*, not the blind acceptance of a falsehood on traditionary or other similar grounds.



of the scholastic age, again, Des Cartes had not sought to recast the whole method of philosophical investigation; and without the results of the old organum before his eyes, Bacon had never framed the new. Had Des Cartes, moreover, or some equivalent mind, failed to point out the new road, Leibnitz had never trodden it, and the German philosophy were still but a possibility; and had Bacon never shown the practical power of induction, Locke had never applied it to the study of the mind, or Newton by its means furnished the key to the temple of the universe. As the course of the vessel that makes its way against the breeze consists of a series of movements, each one of which seems to bear it away from the true direction, yet brings it in fact so much farther on its destined course: so the mind that can only view each individual tack which the philosophic spirit takes, is apt to imagine that every such movement carries it farther from the true mark, whilst those who can take the whole course in at one comprehensive view, see that these apparent deviations are all necessary to bring us nearer and nearer to the centre of eternal truth.

III. These reflections lead us to the consideration of another objection that has been often raised, more especially against the practical utility of speculative philosophy,—namely, that even supposing it to be a real and genuine branch of human knowledge, yet it can only find place in a very few minds, and must ever be completely unintelligible to the mass. This, therefore, is presented as an insuperable barrier against its ever becoming of any extensive advantage, or indeed of its having any kind of influence upon mankind at large.\* Such an objection, we reply, if insisted on, would prove fatal to the cause of almost every branch of human science. It is never expected, and indeed it is not possible, that the mass of mankind should be acquainted with the process by which any kind of investigation whatever is carried on. The search after truth, even the truths of the phenomenal world, is a process to them completely enveloped in darkness; all they have to do is to reap the practical fruits of any discovery, when it is made, without casting one single thought upon the steps by which others have arrived at it. If we look for a moment at the law by which thought is propagated, we find that it always descends from the highest order of thinkers to those who are one degree below them; from these again it descends another degree, losing at each step of the descent something more of the scientific form, until it reaches the mass in the

\* This is the ordinary plea of sensational utilitarianism.



shape of some admitted fact, of which they feel there is not a shadow of doubt, a fact which rests on the authority of what all the world above them says, and which, therefore, they receive totally regardless of the method of its elimination. Take, for example, any great fact or law of nature ascertained by means of physical science. Such a fact is first of all, perchance, wrung from the most close and laborious mathematical analysis; a few, perhaps may take the trouble to follow every step of this process; but the mass even of natural philosophers themselves are content to see what is the method of investigation, to copy the formulas in which it results, and then put it down as so much further accession to their physical science. The mass of intelligent, educated minds, again, with a general idea only of mathematical analysis, accept the fact or law we are now supposing, as one of the many beautiful results of investigations, which they acknowledge to be far beyond the reach of their own powers;—and from them, lastly, it descends to the rest of the community as a *bare fact*, which they appropriate to their own use, simply as being a universally acknowledged truth. The first school-boy you meet would very likely tell you with some accuracy what is the rapidity of light; but as to any observations on the occultations of Jupiter's satellites, or on the phenomena of aberration, or any other such method of computing it, on these he has never bestowed a thought. The commonest seaman that has learned the use of his sextant, applies to his own purposes all the necessary formulas of trigonometry; but as to the methods of investigating such formulas, such matters lie entirely out of his reach.

This law of the descent of thought, however,—this gravitation of ascertained truth from the higher order of minds to the lower, is not confined to the mathematical sciences, nor is it here alone that the results of investigation are transmitted by what may be termed *formulas*. There are such things as historical formulas, as formulas for the various theories of the fine arts, and so also are there philosophical or metaphysical formulas. The results of long and patient reflection, in this last case particularly, embody themselves in some general principle; and this principle, after it has been tested, gradually spreads itself downwards from mind to mind, until thousands act upon it every day of their life, to whom all philosophical thinking is completely foreign. When, therefore, the objection is raised, that metaphysical inquiries lie beyond the reach of the mass, and cannot practically subserve the general in-

terests of mankind, it is entirely forgotten or overlooked, that the *results* of such inquiries are intelligible to all; nay, that they are amongst the most practically efficient and influential of all truths, which can possibly exist in the mind of man. This assertion is fully borne out by much that we meet with in the intellectual history of the past. How few could there have been amongst the multitude of mankind who, in the Middle Ages, ever read a page of Aristotle! And did Aristotle, therefore, exercise but little influence upon them? Far from it. The minds of those who *did* think deeply, were completely moulded by his philosophy; these, again, governed the reflections of those immediately beneath them; and from them the results of Aristotelianism, mingling up as they did especially with the religious opinions of the day, reached the whole of the popular intellect. Look again at the sensualistic philosophy of France during the last century. The people at large, it is true, neither read Locke, from whose writings that philosophy professedly, though not justly emanated, neither did they study the new edition of his principles as published and distorted by Condillac, nor did they understand the process by which Cabanis and others developed the system to its farthest consequences. But they had no difficulty in laying hold of what we may term the formulas of that philosophy—formulas which came before them in very intelligible propositions, declarative of complete materialism, together with an implied denial both of the doctrine of man's immortality, and the existence of a God. We are strongly inclined, indeed, to think, that the results of intellectual philosophy, really speaking, influence the mass of mankind practically more than those of any other department of knowledge whatever; inasmuch as they bear most closely upon the very principles of all human action, elevate or depress the general feeling as to the worth and sanctity of virtue, and give a coloring to the popular religionism of the age. All this assuredly should remind us, that these results ought neither to be looked upon with indifference nor contempt, nor to be framed but upon the most patient and extended investigation.

IV. There is one more objection against intellectual philosophy in its widest extent, which requires some little consideration, namely, That it is entirely superseded and rendered unnecessary by *revelation*. Revelation, it is urged, is an authoritative view of human nature and of human destiny, and was given to perfect the otherwise imperfect knowledge we had of our position and prospects in

the universe ; so that, to philosophize on these things, is no other than to go back to the state in which mankind existed before they had access to this clearer and better light from heaven. Now, first of all, this conclusion can only have its full weight on the supposition, that the objects of revelation and of speculative philosophy are *all* identical ; or, at any rate, that there is no point touched upon in the latter, which is not sufficiently elucidated in the former. This, however, we can by no means admit to be the case. That revelation has thrown a vast light upon the great problem of the world and of human destiny, we allow ; but that it was ever intended to give us there a complete system of philosophy, to erect an entire superstructure of human knowledge, and leave no problem to be solved in the whole region of mental, moral, or what we may more strictly call metaphysical investigation, we are far from being prepared to grant.

For instance, first, the peculiar department of psychology—who, it is asked, expects to find a complete analysis of our mental faculties and susceptibilities in the Bible ? We find, it is true, that the working of our mental powers and faculties is described here and there in the pages of revelation, so far at least as they have a direct bearing upon the religious feelings ; it is true, also, that we see, pointed out for practical use or caution, the passions and desires which are most likely to become dangerous or excessive ; in addition to this, some few conclusions, perhaps, might be drawn from the distinction, that is there made, between the soul and the spirit—the animal man and the spiritual man. These, however, are far from being placed before us in a scientific form, neither are they, by any means, *intended* to furnish a full account of our mental constitution. They are given simply for practical use, and accordingly leave open a large field of scientific investigation, from which many valuable results may be drawn by any mind that can apply to it acute powers of analysis and research. Or to adduce still further the department of morals. That a practical morality of the most elevated character runs through the whole of the Scriptures, and peculiarly through those of the New Testament, no one can fail to admit ; but, as these writings were intended for popular use, to come down to the habits of thinking common in all ages amongst the mass of mankind, we could not naturally expect to find there the *speculative* questions of morals either mooted or solved. As far as our practical necessities go, the morals of the Scriptures are *absolutely perfect*, and furnish an ideal of what the



purity of our nature *ought to be*, which can be derived from no other source whatever ; but it was never intended, that all efforts of man's intellect on these points should be completely contravened, and repressed as by a voice from heaven, telling us that they could no longer be of any service, or answer any useful end. The speculative questions in morals, which are left untouched in the Scriptures, are amongst the most interesting and important to which the human mind can be directed. The inquiry, for example, "in what conscience essentially consists," whether it be a moral sense implanted in us—or whether it be a moral judgment—or whether it be the result of our natural sympathies—or whether it be the cementing of all our feelings and faculties together into one great regulating principle, gives rise to an investigation, which leads us to examine the very groundwork of our moral constitution. The inquiry, again, as to what *virtue* is, objectively considered—whether it arise from the eternal fitnesses of things, or from utility, or from benevolence, or whether its ground is to be found only in the will of God—presents to us another point where there is scope for the most acute and valuable philosophical research. And if it be asked, *why* we should take the pains to search into these speculative questions of morality when the practical side is given us in perfection in the Scriptures ; we answer, that the *intellect* of man ever struggles after satisfaction, as well as his moral and religious nature ; and that, while the latter can be completely supplied from the Scriptures, the former must seek the ground of its satisfaction, and combine its materials into a complete superstructure of knowledge, by means of unwearied and laborious thinking. On these points, and on many others, such as those respecting human liberty and necessity, respecting the doctrine of providence in connection with the subsistence of the material world, respecting our physical conditions here, as influencing the mind, and respecting the "physical theories of another life ;" there is room for many investigations, which are hardly mentioned, not to say exhausted, in the pages of revelation.

But we go a step further in answer to the objection, that revelation renders philosophical thinking unnecessary, and affirm, that the authority of revelation itself must to a considerable extent rest upon it. All religion reposes upon the idea of God as its foundation. Without this idea, revelation itself has no weight, inasmuch as its authority is solely derivable from the fact of its coming *from* God. The being of a God, therefore, is a truth that must to a cer-



tain degree be impressed upon us before we open the very first page of inspiration; nay, its very first proposition would be unintelligible without it. In the beginning, says Moses, God created the heavens and the earth. But who is God? and where is the evidence of His existence? All these must be settled points before the Scriptures can be to us of the slightest authority, and they cannot be settled, when once started, without deep inward reflection upon nature, and upon man as its interpreter.

But, perhaps, we shall be reminded that the Scriptures carry with them their own evidence of the divine existence, the evidence, namely, of miracles openly performed, and well authenticated. True,—to a certain extent they do, but to an extent which can by no means dispense with the other evidence we have mentioned. For, first of all, the argument from miracle, to whatsoever extent it may be valid, must be interpreted and enforced by the light of our reason—and secondly, its validity, as far as it bears upon the divine *existence*, can, even then, only be of a very secondary character; for what mind is there that would be convinced of the being of a God from the witnessing of some temporary change in the laws of nature, when it had totally failed of gaining such conviction from the perpetual and standing wonder of creation itself? Assuredly, if nature, in her most beauteous forms and most striking operations, were insufficient to lead our minds to the conception of an efficient Creator, none of [what would then be] her freaks and wanderings would do so. Nay, when we speak of the evidence of miracles as testifying of the hand of God, that evidence, if I mistake not, derives all its strength from the *previous* confidence we have in the existence of an Almighty power, the framer of the laws of nature, as we see them usually in operation, and which laws, we argue, could not be changed by any power *less* than that, which first called them into being. If chance, or fate, or any other blind impulse, could *create* the world, and fix its laws, it has likewise power to *alter* them; and if, therefore, our reflection upon the constitution of things around us as they are, and the application to them of the great law of causation, is not sufficient to lead us to the conviction of an intelligent cause, from which they sprang, neither would a perpetual series of miracles be able to do so. Miracles, indeed, were never intended to convince any one of the *existence* of God, and it is nought but a misapplication of them to use them for this purpose; they were merely intended to convince us that this Being (of whose existence we have previous

and higher evidence) operates in some particular manner, or through some particular medium.\* All revealed religion, accordingly, rests upon the pedestal of natural religion; all natural religion, again, rests upon the existence of a God; and the certainty of his existence must be derived from the relation of the laws of nature to those of the human mind. If these laws be not established, natural religion fails of a foundation; and if the foundation of natural religion sinks, the whole authority of revealed religion sinks with it to a nonentity. Revelation, therefore, so far from putting a check upon philosophical investigation in reference to these topics, renders it, in fact, only so much the more necessary, and so much the more valuable in proportion as the superstructure, which by the aid of revelation we build upon it, becomes to us of the deeper importance.†

One more thought we throw out upon this objection—namely, that philosophy, by investigating upon natural grounds the state and tendency of human nature, often renders a very essential service to the evidences of revelation. Revelation brings to us a vast number of facts, which it commends to our reception on the ground of testimony and authority. Now, it is clear, that if any of these facts, which come to us primarily upon testimony and authority, can be verified by philosophy, they will carry with them a double evidence, and come home to us with a double weight. Men, who have thought most deeply upon the evidences of revelation, have ever felt how valuable was the accession of strength they attained, wherever scientific investigation could be made to bear upon them. How many, for example, have attempted (we say not how successfully) to elicit a verification of the Mosaic deluge and cosmogony, from the discoveries of geology;‡ in how many instances have we been called upon to hail some fresh light, which physiology has succeeded in throwing upon the scriptural account of the origin of the human family; and on the same principle, what believer in revelation does not rejoice to see the scriptural representations of man's mental and spiritual condition borne out by close and accurate research into the nature and tendencies of the human mind?

\* Since these sentiments were first written, I have been happy to see them further enforced and illustrated in an eloquent article on Pascal, in the "Christian Remembrancer," (Jan. 1847.)

† See Appendix, Note A.

‡ See Sharon Turner's "Sacred History of the Earth," and compare the far more scientific view of the question between Scripture and Geology given in Dr. Pye Smith's Lectures "On the Relation between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science." Compare also Dr. Buckland's "Reliquiæ Diluvianæ" with his Bridgewater Treatise.

The greater be the number of the facts of revelation, which we can show to rest upon the basis of science as well as authority, the better is it for us, both as it regards the strength of their evidence, and the character of their influence. Philosophy, by carrying certainty with it to a given length, and pointing out real difficulties where that certainty ends, is ever mild in its features and tolerant in its tone; on the other hand, the more implicitly we bow to authority, the less tolerant we become to those who choose not to bow as obediently as ourselves. The mind always seizes with a kind of convulsive grasp those truths, for which it can give no very satisfactory account, as though the tenacity with which they are held would go to make up the deficiency in their evidence; and on this ground it is that those who are most ignorant, to prevent the appearance of absurdity, commonly find it necessary to be most dogmatical. On the other hand, an abundance of knowledge and a strength of evidence, as they define more clearly the bounds of the known and the unknown, tend perpetually towards toleration; a fact, which should make every ray of fresh light that is cast from any quarter upon religious truth, of additional value to us. There are many facts, moreover, brought before our attention by revelation, which, if they cannot be reduced to a philosophical form, and be shown to rest upon a scientific basis, are yet rendered antecedently probable by the *analogy* they may be seen to bear to the ascertained laws of nature, or of our own constitution. The analogies of the natural world, for example, in many respects point us to the fact of the soul's immortality; and still more strikingly do the elements of our own moral constitution point us to a perfect moral government, where the idea of human accountability shall find its ultimate completion. In all such cases as these, (which the reader may see admirably handled in the immortal work of Bishop Butler,) intellectual philosophy appears as the handmaid of revelation, not only aiding in making firm the foundation on which it rests, but by its results illustrating and confirming many of the most important truths which come to us on the authority of a divine inspiration.

### SECT. III.—*Rise of Philosophy inevitable.*

Thus far we have attempted to remove the chief objections which lead many to consider the speculative philosophy, whether of a former age or of their own, as altogether valueless. Not only



do we think, however, that these popular prejudices are groundless, but we go a step further, and regard speculative philosophy as a thing *absolutely inevitable*—as inevitable as the wants, desires, and tendencies of the human mind can make it. If, from the fact of its universality, we may consider any branch of our mental activity whatever to be a necessary result of our constitution, assuredly we may do so with regard to the philosophic spirit. Every age of the world, and every nation, the mind of which has attained to any degree of cultivation, have had their different philosophies; that is, have attempted to unravel the problems of their own existence, and those of the universe they behold around them. The grave and contemplative Asiatic silently brooded over these subjects in the earlier stages of man's history; the lively and versatile mind of Greece could not fail to think deeply, and to grapple earnestly with the same great questions; the Roman intellect, at first taken up with the practical toils of warfare and government, was constrained, so soon as the opportunity came, to tread in the same path, notwithstanding it had been already so diligently explored; and Christianity, when it offered peace to the spirit of man wounded by the consciousness of moral imperfection, and satisfied the heart's longing after immortality, did not repress, but rather incited the intellect to greater exertion in order to sound the depths of our being, and fully to comprehend our relation to the Infinite and the Eternal. The Middle Ages, which witnessed the almost total decline of literature, present us still with the spectacle of the human reason struggling on amidst all the surrounding darkness, in order to look beneath the phenomenal world, and to seek after the foundations of human knowledge; and ever since the revival of our modern civilization has given a fresh impulse to the human mind, the whole region of speculative philosophy has been one of the principal objects, upon which it has applied its awakened energies. It is no more possible for the spirit of philosophy to become extinguished, than for the poetic fire to die out of humanity, or the religious faculty to cease to operate within the mind of man; for as long as the impulse of the intellectual faculties exists, it will be ever seeking after satisfaction.

That philosophy, then, will ever flourish among mankind in every age, we may regard as a fair inference from past experience; but now we may go a step beyond experience, and show that its rise is rendered *inevitable* by the very nature of human knowledge, and the impulse we possess for acquiring it. To prove this we must



establish two facts:—FIRST, *That the power of accurate generalization is the true index, by which the extent of our knowledge is measured*; and SECONDLY, *That every branch of human knowledge, if generalized to its full extent, brings us into the region of meta physical research.*

To establish the former of these two principles, we must remember, that human knowledge does not consist in the bare collection and enumeration of facts; this alone would be of little service did we not attempt to classify them, and to educe from such classification general laws and principles. The knowledge, which consists in individual truths, could never be either extensive or definite,—for the multiplicity of objects, which must then crowd in upon the mind, only tends to confound and perplex it, while the memory, overburdened with particulars, is not able to retain a hundredth part of the materials which are collected. To prevent this, the power of generalization comes to our aid, by which the individual facts are so classified under their proper conceptions, that they may at the same time be more easily retained, and their several relations to all other branches of knowledge accurately defined. The colligation and classification of facts, then, we may regard as the two first steps which are to be taken in the attainment of scientific Truth.

The next step after this is to inquire, how these facts may be accounted for; in other words, to consider, what more general fact can be discovered, in which the particular ones shall be contained. In natural science we hear frequent mention made of ascending from particular to general truths,—of different stages of generalization which occur in this process,—and of the highest step to which all the others are preparatory, and in which they are included.\* To illustrate the meaning of these expressions, let us take the case of Astronomy. Any careless observer can perceive the ordinary facts upon which that science is founded. The laborer at his daily toil knows that the moon, the sun, and the planets, rise and set at particular periods. The slightest attention again, would be sufficient to tell us, that the moon goes through a certain course of changes within a month, and the sun within a year. All these facts, however, are included in, and explained by the more general fact, that the earth moves in an orbit round the sun, and the moon round the earth. This fact, again, is included in the dynamical

\* See Whewell's "Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences." Book xi. chap. vi. p. 239, *et seq.*

law, by which the movements of all the heavenly bodies are regulated, and this again in the universal law of gravitation. The difference, therefore, between the knowledge which a careless spectator possesses of any one of the *simple* facts of Astronomy and that possessed by the man of science, lies here—that the one observes the phenomenon simply as a phenomenon, while the other investigates it, places it in connection with other facts, ascends from the particular to the general, and gets so much nearer to the universal law or principle from which it proceeds. The man who only observes the simple phenomena, we say, possesses the least knowledge; he who ascends to the more general propositions enlarges his knowledge proportionably; and lastly, *his* knowledge is the greatest who attains the highest point of generalization and educes *the fact* which includes in it all the rest. If we were to adduce any other branch of human knowledge, we should find that the same principle would hold good, that the ignorant observer might know as much of the bare facts as any one else, and that the philosopher in every case owes his superiority to the process of generalization. In asserting this principle, of course we suppose that the generalization is not hasty and inaccurate, since in that case it could only give rise to false theories; we take for granted, that it is an inference drawn from a sufficiently wide and accurate analysis. When this is the case, it becomes evident that accurate generalization, implying, as it does, both the most complete observation of the individual phenomena, and a reference of them to their proper conceptions and laws, is always the index of our real knowledge; and just as far as we can legitimately extend it, so far may our knowledge be said to reach.

Viewing this first principle, then, as valid, we shall go on to illustrate, and substantiate the *second*, namely, that every branch of human knowledge, if generalized to its full extent, brings us into the region of metaphysical research; that there is no subject of investigation but tends incessantly to this point; that even those subjects which are most unlike in themselves, and which lead us through entirely different fields of mental labor, yet all, if you trace them far enough, meet together in their first principles, and all enter the peculiar region of the metaphysician before you have reached their ultimate basis.

To illustrate this truth, almost any subject will answer equally well. The chemist, for example, investigates matter, tracing it by means of observation and experiment through all its different com-

binations and changes. But who does not know, that the last question at which he arrives, that which weighs the relative claims of ultimate atoms and of infinite divisibility, is one of a purely metaphysical nature? The mechanician studies the laws of forces as exhibited in the material universe, but the explication of the very conception, upon which the whole science rests, that of *power* or causation, again brings us into the province of speculative philosophy. The fundamental axioms and definitions of pure mathematics are just of the same nature; they, too, can only be investigated and explained upon metaphysical grounds. If from these branches of science we turn to that allotted to the physiologist, we find ourselves in another region of thought, at the basis of which lies the mysterious idea of life;—an idea which is closely connected with some of the most interesting problems in the whole range of speculative philosophy.

It is not only those subjects, however, which come under the notion of *science*, that lead us up through the several stages of generalization to the ethereal regions of metaphysical speculation; every branch of human knowledge, if investigated to a similar extent, leads exactly to the same point. Take, for example, the province of the historian, a province which appears at first sight to confine itself entirely to an investigation and a description of external facts. The primary object of the historian, it is true, may be considered simply this; to discover events as they occurred, and to describe them in the best possible manner; but the true philosophical historian is far from being content with this. He looks upon the phenomena of human life and activity as the direct result of human nature, as it exists in the world, and seeks to trace them to their proper source in the constitution of the human mind. The subject of government, as it has appeared in the different states and countries of our earth, leads us directly to the deeper question concerning the foundation of man's natural rights; for all government is constructed upon the primary conception of right or justice, and must be adjudged as fundamentally good or bad according to its agreement or disagreement with it. If we search again into the history of civilization and learning, or of the arts and sciences, as they have sprung up and made greater or lesser advancement amongst different nations, here, too, we are insensibly led to the study of the human mind. All civilization is an effect which must spring from certain causes, and the object of the philosophical historian in tracing it, is to point out the influence, which various forms



of government, various features of natural scenery, various modes of religion, and various circumstances in general, have had in stimulating man to exertion in different directions, and towards different objects. History is, in fact, a detail of the various manifestations of mind, as they have been impressed upon the surface of human life; and the philosophical historian will attempt to deduce from the past, those laws of human action, which have heretofore moulded the features of society, and which, we may predict, will under similar circumstances, operate in a similar manner for the future. This whole branch of human knowledge, therefore, leads us inevitably to the study of man, to the investigation of the primary laws of the human mind, and only when it has pursued its inquiries to that point does it attain a high degree of generalization, and give us a full satisfaction in its results.\*

To adduce another instance of the intimate connection that subsists between the various branches to which our mental activity is directed, and speculative philosophy, I would point out that of the fine arts. Here, as in most other subjects, there is a practical, and a theoretical side, the former of which, although it may be successfully pursued by itself, is nevertheless based upon the latter. Poetry may be loved, and may be created by the impulse of an enthusiastic soul, and the exertion of a lively imagination, without any reflection upon the sources from which the poetic fire is kindled; but the inquiry will still force itself upon us in due time—What is enthusiasm, what is the nature of creative imagination, and what is the ground upon which the pleasure we derive from all such sources depends? The answer to this, it is evident, will lead us into abundant metaphysical inquiries long before we have probed the subject to its complete elucidation. Painting, again, may be cultivated simply by attention to practical rules, especially when there is a natural aptitude for it; but then the pleasure we derive from it arises mainly from our susceptibility of the emotion of beauty. We ask, therefore, What is Beauty? How is it excited? In what does it consist? Is the highest beauty *real*, and has it ever been actually embodied in nature? or is it *ideal*, and only imaged in the mind? Must the painter strive to copy exactly what exists, or has

\* The philosophy of history is almost entirely a science of modern times. It commenced with Jno. Bapt. Vico (born at Naples, 1650,) in his "*Scienza Nuova*;" was further developed by Herder in his "*Ideen zur Philos. der Gesch. der Menschheit*;" has since received further contributions from Schlegel and the German Idealists; and, lastly, has been reduced to the forms of the "positive philosophy," by Auguste Comte. The term *Sociology* is now coming into use to designate this branch of scientific research. See Mill's "*Logic*," vol. ii.



he to seek a perfection which is only floating within his own mind, and which he must be perpetually endeavoring to transfer from the inner chamber of imagery to the canvas before him? The decision of this, one way or the other, will give rise to completely different schools of painting. The advocate of the *beau-real* would never become another Raphael, nor would the advocate of the *beau-ideal* ever form a second Vandyk.

If it be asked, why we should employ our minds in theorizing on these different subjects, when the practical application of them can be made without any knowledge whatever of their theory, we answer, because man is formed with a desire to *know*, as well as to *do* and *feel*, because the love of knowledge is an impulse quite as strong as those other impulses which lead more directly to action, and because we can no more be happy without satisfying the former, when it once takes possession of our mind, than we can without satisfying the latter.

If from the fine arts we descend into the pursuits and toils of practical life, here, too, we soon find that we are conducted step by step, as we proceed backward towards first principles, into the region of metaphysics. Our practical life consists, for the most part, in the performance of *duties*. But what is a duty? What claim has it over our conscience, and on what is grounded its obligation? I have duties to perform towards my country. Is patriotism, then, an emotion implanted by nature, and if so, to what extent should I compromise my own natural rights in favor of the community at large? The whole question of the rights of nature, to which we are thus brought, leads us, as we before remarked, into one of the most fruitful of all discussions on man's constitution and position in the present world. I have other duties, moreover, to perform in social life, and again others which relate simply to my own moral being. But in such cases, what is the ground, and what the rule of morality? To elucidate these questions, we must take the torch of philosophy to our aid, and only when we have traced back the whole theory of our practical life to its philosophical principles, do we find a basis upon which we can rest with any mental satisfaction.

These few instances, perhaps, may be sufficient to elucidate the fact, that all generalization, whatever be the subject to which it is applied, tends to lead us into philosophical researches, so soon as ever it begins to touch upon first principles. Other arts and sciences aim at particular objects, accomplish particular purposes,

and carry on their investigations only to a particular extent. This being accomplished, the end of each is satisfied. Philosophy, on the contrary, seeks the *completion* of our knowledge ; it lays bare the hidden foundations upon which all other sciences rest, and weighs the validity of the axioms which they tacitly assume. No sooner do we view these different branches of human knowledge with the eye of the speculative philosopher, than we begin at once to see that the courses of them all are convergent, tending perpetually to one point. Many of the minor channels, after being followed backward for a certain distance, merge into the course of some wider stream. As we go further back the channels become fewer, though, at the same time, wider and deeper ; but still some few remain distinct from each other, and ever exhibit a cloud of darkness enveloping their source, until the philosophic spirit dares to enter the cloud, and trace their course up to the very point where they all unite. On this account, no doubt, philosophy may sometimes incur the charge of vagueness and indistinctness in its operations and results ; but instead of joining in this complaint, we should rather admire the courage and intelligence that dare to penetrate into what was before a region of cloud and darkness, that succeed in gaining new glimpses of an unknown land, and that struggle on against almost insuperable difficulties, even at the risk of here and there losing the road, to their great results. Far should we be from regarding it as presumptuous to enter these sacred limits, or, because philosophy is sometimes bewildered in the mazes it attempts to track, denounce its whole attempt as vain and fruitless.

Let us now sum up the results of the foregoing considerations in a few words. Man possesses intellectual powers, the object and constant tendency of which is the acquisition of knowledge. The advancement of knowledge is measured by the power of accurate generalization, and all generalization, when sufficiently extensive, brings us to the investigation of first principles, that is, to the region of speculative philosophy. Hence we conclude that the rise of philosophy is *inevitable*, being necessitated by the very nature of human knowledge, and the innate tendency we possess to acquire it.

From this point of view we can now gain a clearer insight into the true idea and real office of philosophy properly so called. Striving as it does to unite all the various objects of mental pursuit, to complete in form the pyramid of human knowledge, to

bring even the very foundations thereof to view, it may be regarded as the *science of sciences*, as that which shows the connection and the basis of all the rest. The intellectual philosophy, accordingly, of any age may be regarded as the *last word* which the reason of that age pronounces, inasmuch as its laws, politics, arts, literature, and to a certain extent its peculiar views of religion also, are but the reflex of the philosophy which is then supreme. Or perhaps it might be more accurate were we to say, that the intellectual spirit of any epoch, that which manifests itself in the various channels of literary and practical life, finds in philosophy its highest expression, and shows there most clearly its real undisguised form.\*

This will appear more evident if we consider that philosophy places every subject in its most abstract light, and seeks to bring everything it touches upon into the region of clear and definite thought. Now there is in mankind at large a process of latent thought which is spontaneously produced by the spirit of the age in which they live, but is only seen and acknowledged by the mass in its outward and visible effects. Men, for the most part, view the thoughts and conceptions, by which their minds are governed, only in the peculiar phases which the literature, the arts, the religion of the age assume,—for these are the shrines on which the divinities they worship are represented in a symbolical form. On the other hand, the ideas which can only operate upon the mass of mankind through some external channel, and in some objective form, become to the philosopher strictly subjective. He strips them of all their exterior dress, separates the mere appendages from the essence, and views them, not as something out of himself, but as parts or products of his own individual consciousness. In the case of the former, the subject, which observes, entirely separates itself from the object, which is observed. The power of thought goes forth spontaneously, exerts itself spontaneously, and at length embodies itself unconsciously in various symbols, which are then looked upon as having an independent existence: in the philosopher, this same thought, which had been hitherto spontaneous, becomes reflective, and the distinction of subject and object is destroyed in the complete identity that takes place, when thought becomes the object of its own study and contemplation. It is in philosophy, therefore, that the thought of every age comes to the

\* Cousin, "Cours de Philosophie"—Introduct. Leçon ix.



proper consciousness of itself, and appears stripped of the different dresses in which alone it is recognized by mankind at large.\*

In every period of the world there are some few great ideas or principles at work, which, though sunk deeply and almost hidden at the very core and centre of the spirit of the age, are yet working themselves outward, and impressing their shapes upon every feature of society. What do we mean when we speak of great problems, which are gradually evolving their own solution in the progressive advancement of human things? Is not the real meaning of such expressions something of this nature: That there is some great thought which is lying at present half unconsciously in the minds of the people, and which is emerging gradually but surely more and more into the light of day? Every age assuredly has some such thought, which appears and re-appears in a thousand different forms. It shows itself in the habits and customs which then arise; it shows itself in the spirit of the laws and institutions which are then established; it shows itself in the different schools of the fine arts, which ever take the coloring and type of the age that gives them birth; it shows itself in the literature which is then most ardently pursued; and to no little extent does it show itself in the popular forms of religion, which then gain favor and celebrity. The thought which thus almost unconsciously governs the age, at length comes forth in its purest and most simple form, separated from all the extraneous material with which it is mixed up, by the severe analysis to which it is subjected in the crucible of an enlightened philosophy. There is, if we look deep enough, an intellectual cause to be assigned for the customs and manners of society; there is a psychological ground, from which spring the different forms of law and government; similar reasons may be found for the rise of the imaginative arts, of the different fields of literary pursuit, and even of the various shades of religious worship; for there are but few comparatively who, uninfluenced by the spirit of the age, look through all the forms and phraseology even of Christianity itself, and gaze face to face upon the eternal ideas which they embody. It is the spirit of philosophy, therefore, that is to search for the ground of all these multifarious phenomena, to look under the surface for the ideas from which they all spring; to trace every manifestation of intelligence in human society to those primary laws of our constitution to which they all owe their birth, and to seek thus the completion of our knowledge by laying

\* On this point see Cousin's "*Cours de Philosophie*"—Introduction, Leçon i.



bare the whole superstructure down to the simple foundation on which it all reposes. Such attempts accordingly we consider to be inevitable, called forth as they are by the natural impulse of the human mind to investigate truth to its most universal and abstract forms, and to discover the primary elements from which all knowledge takes its rise.\*

#### SECT. IV.—*Primary Elements of Human Knowledge.*

The advancement of human knowledge we have already seen to be indicated by the progress of accurate generalization. The most ordinary ideas of mankind are the most complex, and the effect of the united process of abstraction and generalization is gradually to simplify them, until we arrive at the ultimate elements of which they consist. We may illustrate this by a reference to the progress of chemical science. The objects of nature by which we are surrounded are extremely complex, and the forms which they assume infinitely diversified. The chemist begins his researches by classifying them under different heads; by noting down certain properties which many in common possess, until he gradually arrives at the knowledge of simpler materials. As his investigation goes on, the analysis becomes more close and accurate, and the ultimate point at which it all tends is to discover the original elements of which the whole material universe consists. In the same manner, the object of the metaphysician is to analyze thought, to reduce the multiplicity of our mental phenomena to a few general heads, and thus ultimately to discover the primary elements of which all knowledge consists. Before we enter upon the history of philosophy, therefore, it will be necessary to point out what the primary elements really are, as our classification of the different systems of philosophy will mainly depend upon the view we take of this point.

In deducing these elements, it is not my present intention to go into a full discussion of the question, since this would bring us too

\* It was my hope and intention that the above illustrations should make evident the sense in which I understand the term Philosophy to be properly used. I fear I have not been altogether successful. Dr. Chalmers, (*North Brit. Rev.* Feb. 1847,) assuming a peculiar definition, (that which reduces all philosophy to one small section of it,—namely, Psychology,) contends that I have greatly magnified its office. Of course I have, if all I meant to include in it is *mental philosophy*. But no mistake can be greater than to suppose philosophy and psychology to be here taken as identical.

rapidly upon the most difficult problems that are to be found in the whole range of metaphysics; all we shall now do is, simply to indicate in few words the results which have been arrived at by the most acute analysts, and to follow their track until a more clear and correct one shall be pointed out.

Now, in generalizing our knowledge, so as to deduce the ultimate elements of which it consists, there are two methods which may be employed. Either we may make a classification of all objective things around us, as being the *material* of our thoughts and feelings, and having reduced them to their most universal heads, regard these as the required elements; or, on the other hand, we may analyze our consciousness, and having reduced the mental phenomena we find there to the smallest possible number, assume these as the elements from which all the multiplicity of our thoughts proceeds. The one process consists of a classification of the *objects* of our knowledge—the other is a dissection of thought in its *subjective* phases. The former of these methods, it is well known, was pursued by Aristotle—the first man who undertook the gigantic task of reducing the multiplicity of all the objects of human knowledge to a few general heads—and the result of this attempt was the *ten categories*, which will ever remain a standing monument of his wonderful power, both of analysis and of generalization.

Perhaps it may seem unnecessary to enumerate anything so universally known as these categories, but we give them here to assist the reader in drawing a comparison between the result of Aristotle's investigations on this point, and that of some authors, who have given other classifications upon different principles. They are as follows:—1. Substance; 2. Quantity; 3. Quality; 4. Relation; 5. Action; 6. Passion; 7. Place; 8. Time; 9. Posture; 10. Habit.

That this enumeration is complete in the sense of being all-embracing, there can be but little doubt; it appears impossible to imagine the existence of any object of human thought, externally considered, which might not be fairly reduced to one of these heads. Admitting, therefore, the principle upon which Aristotle proceeds, we may regard his classification, not indeed, as perfect, since a much closer analysis might be made; but still, as being on the score of completeness eminently successful. So much so, indeed, did it appear to other minds, that no improvement upon it was effected for more than two thousand years.

The intellectual effort, however, which Aristotle put forth to deduce the elements of human knowledge, was renewed by Kant upon the other, or subjective principle. Instead of looking to the outward materials of our knowledge, and seeking the primary elements from an analysis and generalization of these, he looked to the mind itself, inquired into the fundamental conceptions under which everything external must be viewed, and upon these conceptions constructed a complete table of categories. Aristotle had classified the *matter* of our thoughts, Kant undertook to classify the *forms*: the one deduced the objective, the other the subjective elements in human knowledge. Admitting, as did both, that all our ideas must have their raw material from without, and that this material is put into shape and order by the powers or laws of the human understanding, Aristotle, with his sensational tendency, sought to accomplish his object by investigating the former, while Kant, with his ideal tendency, sought the same object by investigating the latter.

In order, then, to accomplish this purpose, Kant showed that there are three great faculties in man, each of which has its own laws or modes of operation. These are (to use a plain English phraseology)—Sensational-perception, Understanding, and pure Reason. Sensation gives the matter of our notions; Understanding gives the form; while Reason brings unity and connection to the whole exercise of the understanding, and aims ever at the infinite, the unconditioned, the absolute. The forms or categories of sensation are two—Time and Space. It is the *where* and the *when* that is determined by this faculty, since everything we perceive must by that very act be placed in some given time, and in some given space. The laws of the *understanding*, which are more peculiarly denominated “Categories,” by Kant, are reduced to *twelve*,—these twelve falling under four general, or head-categories. 1. Under the head of Quantity, we have Unity, Plurality, and Totality; 2. Under the head of Quality, we have Affirmation, Negation, and Limitation; 3. Under the head of Relation, we have Substance, Causality, and Reciprocity; and lastly, Under the head of Modality, are contained Possibility, Actuality, and Necessity. These are, according to Kant, the twelve conceptions in relation to which everything really existing must be viewed. Then, lastly, comes the highest faculty of man, that of pure Reason, the form of which is absolute unity, and which, according as it is directed to substance, or to phenomena, or to the ideal of



perfection, leads to the three irreducible ideas—of the Soul (the absolute subject), of the Universe (the totality of all phenomena), and of God (the all-perfect essence). To sum up, then, the whole analysis which Kant gives us of our intellectual nature, or, as he would term them, modes of our intellectual being, we have two for our Sensational faculty, twelve for the Understanding, and three by which the Reason strives after absolute unity in its ideas; making in all seventeen categories. The fuller explanation of Kant's doctrine of the categories, we must leave till we come to the consideration of the Kantian Philosophy in its proper place.\*

The influence of Kant in Germany drew the attention of philosophers mainly to the one point, which he had treated with so great skill and acuteness—namely, the determination of the fundamental laws of thought, or the primary elements of our intellectual being. As the analysis became more close, doubts were entertained as to the correctness of his classification. The number of these fundamental laws or primary elements became thus gradually reduced, and the foundations of intellectual science by degrees confined within narrower limits. The history of this process will be pointed out more particularly hereafter; the fruits of it, to which only we can now refer, have been abundantly reaped, and still further matured, by one of the first of living philosophers, M. Cousin, who, with singular depth and clearness, has critized the labors of Kant, and by the application of all the rigor of more modern analysis, has reduced the whole of the Kantian categories to two *fundamental ideas*.

According to Cousin, then, all our thoughts may be reduced to the two primitive ideas of *Action* and *Being*; the one giving the category of causality, the other of substance; the one implying the relative, the contingent, the particular, the phenomenal; the other implying the absolute, the necessary, the universal, the infinite. Without entering into the abstruse details, by which the categories of Kant are referred to these heads, it may be sufficient to point out how these two fundamental ideas are deduced, and what they severally contain; and, perhaps, it is impossible to give this deduction in clearer and more concentrated language than that which has been employed by M. Cousin himself. "The human reason,"

\* The doctrine of the Categories or fundamental ideas of the human mind, is still the subject of much philosophical discussion. Among the most recent treatises on the subject we may mention an "Essai d'une Nouvelle Théorie sur les Idées fondamentales," par F. Perron, Paris, 1843; also, in German, a learned and somewhat popular work entitled "Geschichte der Kategorienlehre," by F. A. Trendelenburg.



he says, "in whatever manner it develops itself, whatever it grasps, on whatever it meditates ; whether it stop short with the observation of surrounding nature, or whether it penetrates into the depths of the inward world, conceives of all things under the type of two ideas. If it examines number and quantity, it is impossible for it to see anything there more than unity and multiplicity. The one and the diverse, the one and the multiple, unity and plurality, these are the two elementary ideas of reason, in which every consideration relative to number terminates. If it occupies itself with space, it can only conceive of it under two points of view, those, namely, of bounded or determined space on the one side, of absolute space on the other. If it occupies itself with existence, if it views things under the sole respect that *they are*, it can only conceive of the idea of absolute existence, or the idea of relative existence. Does it think of time ? It conceives either of time as determined, (time properly so called,) or of time *in itself*, absolute time—namely, eternity ; in the same manner as absolute space is immensity. Does it think of forms ? It conceives either of a form that is finite, determined, limited, measurable ; or of something which is the principle of this form, which is neither measurable, nor limited, nor finite ; in a word, it conceives of the infinite. If it thinks of movement or action, it can only conceive of limited action, and the source of limited action ; of powers and causes that are bounded, relative and secondary, on the one hand, or of an absolute power, a first cause, on the other, beneath which, in respect of action, it is not possible to seek or to find anything. If it thinks of all exterior and interior phenomena, which develop themselves around us—of this whole moving scene of events and accidents of every kind ; there, again, it can only conceive of two things, the manifestation and appearance, as simple appearance and simple manifestation ; or of that which, while it appears, retains something that does not pass away in the appearing—that is, of being in itself ; or, to take the language of science, we here conceive of phenomenon and substance. In thought again, it conceives of thoughts which refer to this thing or that, which may be or may not be ; and it conceives of the principle of thought in itself—the principle which exists, without doubt, in all our relative thoughts, but which is never exhausted. In the moral world, it conceives of certain things as beautiful or good ; and then it inevitably brings there also these same categories of the finite and infinite, which become now the perfect and the imperfect, the beau-real

and the beau-ideal, virtues with the miseries of reality, or the saint in his elevation and unsullied purity. These, as it appears to me," adds M. Cousin, "are all the elements of human reason. The outward world, the intellectual world, the moral world, all are subjected to these two ideas. Reason only develops and can only develop itself on these two conditions. The great division of ideas now universally accepted, is that into contingent and necessary ideas. This division, in a more circumscribed point of view, is the reflex of that at which I stop, and which you can represent to yourselves under the formula of unity and multiplicity, of substance and phenomenon, of absolute cause and relative causes, of the perfect and imperfect, of the finite and the infinite."\*

Such is M. Cousin's ultimate reduction of the primary elements of all our knowledge. As, however, the category of causality contains in it two very important and very distinct ideas, it may be as well to give another and a simpler *deduction* of these great fundamental conceptions of the human mind; one which may, perhaps, place the whole question in a somewhat clearer light.

The first and most obvious idea that we possess within our consciousness, is that of our own existence. The notion of *self*, or of *the me*, as it has been so often and so significantly termed, must necessarily be a primitive and a universal notion, since it is implied in every perception we experience, in every thought we create, in a word, in every mental act we perform. We all feel conscious that there is something we call *ourselves*, which possesses and can exert power, and to which, as a fundamental unity, all the multiplicity of our thoughts and feelings are to be referred. This power, however, or energy, which we variously call the will, the acting and knowing principle, or *the me*, is not an infinite and absolute power. On the contrary, it finds itself bounded, resisted, and opposed on every side. There is not an effort we put forth, but we find it limited and circumscribed by some counter force, which we are conscious really *exists*, and which acts upon us independently of ourselves. No sooner do we become cognizant of self, and the power we possess of willing and acting, than we find all around a world that offers resistance to us at every point, together with phenomena and laws that often seem directly in contradiction to our own volitions, and which, if not attended to, would instantly involve us in suffering and death. To the idea of self there stands opposed, therefore, the idea of something which is *not self*; or, as it has

\* *Vid.* "Cours de l'Histoire de la Philosophie," Introd. Lect. iv.

been otherwise expressed, *the me* finds around it other existences that are separate from us, and which, therefore, we may term the *not-me*, as being the most general phrase by which it can be denominated. The one of these ideas, indeed, supposes and involves the other. We could have no distinct notion of self, but as opposed to, and separate from, other existences around us; nor could we have any notion of an external world, but as something which is opposed to and separate from ourselves.

These, then, are two of the most fundamental ideas of the human mind: that of self on the one side, with its intelligence and its liberty; that of a physical world on the other, with its *power* of inertia—a world to whose laws we are to some extent subjected, and which we have, by mingled obedience and resistance, to bend and mould to our necessities and desires. So far, however, we are not yet out of the region of the finite. The *me*, as we have seen, is limited in its actions and volitions by the *not-me*: it is a finite cause, that can be resisted and changed variously by other causes which act around it. Nature, *too*, is finite. It can only oppose us to a limited extent, and we can in our turn resist and modify it. Both of these ideas, therefore, come under the notion of the relative, the limited, the bounded, the finite, the phenomenal; and both equally belong to the category of causality, the former being a voluntary or intentional cause, the other a blind and fatal one.

These two general ideas, however, which we have thus placed under the category of causality, by no means exhaust all the materials of thought that exist in the human mind.\* Just in the same manner as *the me* implies the notion of a *not-me* from which it is distinguished, and by the perception of which we become conscious of our own separate individuality in the whole universe of things around us;—so the notion of the limited and the finite implies the correlative one of the unlimited and the infinite. Let any one attentively examine his own inmost thoughts, and he will find that there can be no distinct idea whatever in the mind, without the implication of something else from which it is separated, and to which it is opposed. Every distinct idea must be *defined*; that is, it must be *bounded off* from other ideas, the existence of which ideas is ac-

\* The division of *the me* and the *not-me*, would certainly appear to be exhaustive at first sight, and with regard to finite existence it is so. But when we come to consider absolute existence, we can no more refer it to the one than to the other. Self and nature both lie embosomed in the infinite;—*the me* and the *not-me* equally partake of the absolute in their essence, and it is in this view of the case, that to these two finite conceptions we add the idea of the infinite, as that in which they both subsist. To include the absolute in the *not-me*, as some propose, would be to exclude an absolute ground from the idea of humanity. This we cannot admit.



cordingly supposed by the very fact of definition. Take the idea of *relative*, and see whether it would convey any notion to the mind whatever, unless the idea of *absolute* existed as that to which it is opposed. What, again, were our notion of finite, without the correlative one of infinite; or what of multiplicity, without that of unity? Now, if we take the category of causality in any of the different phases under which we have presented it, we find that in every case there is a correlative and an opposed notion, which we must place in what we have termed the category of *substance*; i. e. of the infinite and unchangeable, or of being *per se*. If, e. g., we consider the world of phenomena, we are necessitated by our reason itself to suppose and admit some *substance*, in which these phenomena adhere, and which remains ever essentially the same amidst all the changes that may appear on the surface. If we think of *cause*, we are unable to imagine it without admitting the existence of some *being*, from which the power, variously displayed, emanates. If we think of events, we cannot conceive of them without *time*, the one immeasurable duration in which all events exist. If we think of objects as they lie in space around us, we are obliged to refer them to a universal space that envelops all the visible in its vast embrace. In all these instances the two categories penetrate each other, so that the one notion only becomes possible by the opposition with which the other throws it out before our view.

The same primary ideas, which we have deduced by the foregoing process, arise equally before our view when we confine our attention to the subjective world, and analyze the phenomena of our own mental faculties. The mind of man is the mirror of universal nature, and whatever exists accessible to us in the whole region of being, material or spiritual, we find imaged in 'us with the most perfect accuracy.' Man possesses a sensational faculty; and to what does this point us? Manifestly to the objective existence of an external world, the varied forms of which are, by means of this faculty, made accessible to our own minds. Man possesses, moreover, intelligence; he possesses the power of volition, he possesses impulses, desires, affections, and all these phenomena imply the existence of a *subject* to which they alike belong. Intelligence is *my* intelligence; it is the comprehension of things as I have classified and generalized them for my own use and convenience. Volition is *my* volition; and so also are the various desires and impulses *my own* subjective feelings, those which I myself experi-



ence, and which no one else can experience precisely in the same manner. Here, then, we find our own faculties pointing out to us by their very constitution, the existence of two realities; in the one case, that of the being I term *self*, in the other case, that of an external world which is distinguished from *self*, and opposed to it. In both cases, however, we are kept down within the region of the finite and the relative: for neither sensation nor understanding, nor our desires or volitions, lead us directly to the region of the absolute and eternal.

If we look a little further, however, we find that man has the faculty of perceiving absolute and necessary truth, as well as that which is relative and finite; that there are ideas within us which come neither through the channel of the senses nor are dependent upon the peculiar constitution of our own minds, but which are the clear reflection within us of absolute and eternal realities. In the case of sensation, I perceive objects which might or might not be; objects which may yet be changed and modified in a thousand different ways. In simple understanding, I observe relations which might or which might not exist,—relations, perhaps, which I have artificially made for my own use, and which I can as easily destroy. In every case of volition, the resolution to which I come is strictly *my own*, *i. e.* the fruit of my own will. But far otherwise is it with everything belonging to pure and absolute reason. Take for instance, any axiomatic truth of pure mathematics. It is not through mere sensation that you have arrived at it; neither is it an *arbitrary relation* of your own production; nor is it conceived of in pursuance of any resolution of your own will. Try as you may, and you cannot alter the conceptions of pure reason even to an infinitesimal degree. My sensations are my own, and my volitions are my own; but truth, absolute truth, is not mine nor yours, neither is it within the bounds of our possible belief, that it should be different to any rational mind from what it is to ours. Absolute truth has no element of *personality* in it, and our reason, therefore, as far as it grasps the necessary and the eternal, is strictly speaking an impersonal reason. It is the reflection within ourselves of eternal things, as they are—an emanation or ray of the infinite reason, which governs the universe by the laws of unerring wisdom and truth, and which, as far as it is manifested at all, is manifested to every mind alike.\*

\* To comprehend the impersonality of reason aright, the reader should study Cousin's doctrine of "pure apperception," which he will find clearly stated in the 13th Lecture of his "Cours de Phil. sur le Fondement du Vrai, du Beau, et du Bien."

Here, then, we are led again to the same virtual conclusion, that the three great and primary elements of all our knowledge are, firstly, the idea of our own individual existence, or of finite mind in general; secondly, the idea of nature; and, thirdly, the idea of the absolute and eternal, as manifested in the pure conceptions of our impersonal reason. Every notion of our intellectual life, we believe, may be traced to one of these sources, and we regard them, therefore, as the primitive elements of all our knowledge,—starting-points from which every true system of intellectual philosophy must take its rise. It is to the method, then, by which the different philosophical systems have grounded themselves upon these fundamental ideas, that we must now briefly revert.

#### SECT. V.—*Systems of Philosophy.*

A synthetical system of intellectual philosophy has for its object,—first, a complete enumeration of all the primary elements of our knowledge; and secondly, the expansion of these simple elements into all the multiplicity of our ideas and conceptions, however varied and complicated they may appear. Philosophical systems, therefore, will differ amongst themselves, according as they hold up any one of these fundamental ideas, which we have deduced, most prominently to our view, and make it either the *chief* or the *sole* element from which all our other ideas are derived. Systems of philosophy have accordingly ever taken three great directions, corresponding to the three fundamental ideas, upon one or other of which they have severally been founded. These three primary directions of the philosophic spirit, we must first of all elucidate, and then show the other or secondary directions which arise from them.

The most vivid and striking facts of our consciousness are unquestionably those which we term sensations. To them the mind is sure at first to bend its attention, and as the progress of investigation goes on, it discovers an immense multitude of notions over and above our simple perceptions, the germ of which must undoubtedly be traced to the sensational faculty. Physical science, for example, in all its branches, and every kind of knowledge, indeed, that is connected with the objects of the external world, arise directly from the analysis, classification, and general investigation of those numberless materials, which come through the channel of

our sensations. So far the progress of what we shall term the sensational philosophy is perfectly legitimate and correct, and has given rise from time to time to splendid results. Many philosophers, however, absorbed in the multitude, the variety, and the grandeur of the fruits of physical science, have lost sight of everything else—have made the senses the sole fountains of human knowledge, and built up a whole metaphysical system upon the basis of external nature. Such, in fact, was the philosophy of the French Encyclopædists, and such, *in tendency*, was the philosophy of Locke.

A precisely contrary direction, on the other hand, has arisen from a too close and partial analysis of *self*. In this analysis our volitions, our desires, and the subjective laws of our reason and intelligence, were very properly and plainly separated from the whole region of sensation; but after a time, when attention became entirely concentrated upon the inherent powers of the individual mind, the external world itself was made to depend upon its subjective laws, and there resulted a whole philosophical system based upon the one notion of *self*, with its native and exhaustless energies. Such is idealism,—true and beautiful in its results, so long as it investigates what are, properly speaking, the innate faculties of the human mind, but false and delusive when it would go a step too far, and draw from within what a more accurate philosophy shows to arise from an objective world around us. Such, in its fullest extent, was the philosophy of Berkeley in England, and of Fichte in Germany; such, in its tendency, was Kantism; and such, in its first and better movement, was the system with which Dr. Reid honored and enlightened his country.

The third element of our intellectual life remains, that, namely, which appears under the varied forms of the substantial, the eternal, the immeasurable, the infinite; in a word, the idea of being itself in which the finite mind and finite nature are both equally grounded; and accordingly, we look around now for a philosophy, which answers to this fundamental notion. What, then, we inquire, must necessarily be the character of such a philosophy, when the world of phenomena is sunk in the profounder idea of substance, when the varied phases of our own consciousness are lost in the depths of Being *per se*,—when subject and object are both absorbed in one prior and eternal principle,—the Temporal lost in the Eternal, the Finite in the Infinite. This philosophy has been realized in different forms under the one idea of *Pantheism*. Such, in



the ancient world, was substantially the doctrine of the Eleatics; such, in modern times, was the doctrine of Spinoza; and such, in a more refined and perfect form, are now the respective philosophies of Schelling and Hegel. As, however, the pantheistic scheme is properly idealistic, (inasmuch as the material world is virtually denied,) we may include the two latter of the three systems I have pointed out under the general term of *Idealism*; and if we wish to make a distinction between them, we may term the one subjective idealism (that which absorbs everything in the subject—the *me*,) and the other objective idealism, or the doctrine which reduces everything to the one infinite, unchangeable, objective substance or being, of which, and in which, all things consist. In this way we shall have simply two main tendencies in philosophy; that of sensationalism on the one hand, and idealism on the other.\*

That the philosophic spirit, however, should remain content with the struggles of two opposite schools, both giving opposite conclusions, and both running into extravagant results, was a thing in its nature impossible. The contradictions thus thrown up to view naturally give rise to a critical philosophy, the object of which is to examine the grounds and pretensions of every other system, to check the progress and arraign the conclusions of dogmatism, and to get nearer the True by denying and overturning the False. The philosophy which thus aims at detecting falsehood without attempting to build up any system of truth, we term *Scepticism*: not that contemptible species of scepticism which, as practised by

\* An acute writer in the Prospective Review (No. viii.) has expressed surprise that I should include the two categories of The me and the Absolute under the one title of Idealism. I remark, in reply to his observations, that the classification is a matter of convenience, and not at all intended, as he supposes, to merge the two *ideas* into one. The terms subjective and objective *idealism*, have long been applied to these two movements; so that I am merely retaining the well-known phraseology of the German schools. The reason of my retaining the classification is this—that in our common philosophical language *sensations* and *ideas* represent the two great sources of our knowledge. We have an outward source—nature; and an inward source—*pure ideas*, which terminate on the side of the *will* in self—on the side of the *reason* in God. Sensationalism, accordingly, is the philosophy built upon the former—subjective and objective idealism is that built upon the two latter. To say that “the proper association of the absolute is with the not-me,” (p. 561,) either throws the category of the me into a false position, by making it opposed to the absolute in a sense in which nature is not opposed to it; or commits the same error which is wrongly attributed to myself, namely, that of throwing two distinct terms, nature and the absolute, under one category—that of the not-me. And yet a little further on (p. 563.) it is proposed to deduce the absolute, alike from the me and the not-me, when viewed not as *cause* but as *condition*. To associate the absolute with the not-me, and then to deduce it immediately from both categories together, appears to me an instance of “*unaccountable simplicity*,” at least equal to that which the writer attributes to myself in uniting the me and the not-me under the head of idealism. If I have not caught his meaning, I must plead as excuse, that his style seems expressly adapted to hide the *thoughts* behind a dazzling brilliancy of ornamental illumination.



some, is nothing more than a secret abhorrence of human reason, and a disguised misanthropy; but that which honestly aims after truth by means of exposing error wherever it may lurk. As in the case of sensationalism and idealism, therefore, so also in scepticism there is a good side and a bad; the one seeking to establish truth, by separating from it all untruth, the other seeking to lay truth as well as error alike prostrate at the foot of an obstinate and irrational unbelief. Such, then, is the natural result of the struggle between an extreme sensationalism on the one hand, and an extreme idealism on the other.

That scepticism, however, should be the culminating point of the philosophic spirit, and that the human mind should rest satisfied with the ultimate conclusion, that the highest wisdom is to doubt, were altogether inconceivable. Sceptical philosophy may be invaluable as an *instrument*, which helps us on the road to truth by dissipating fond delusions; but the mind can only repose at last in *positive*, or, as we may term them, *dogmatical* results. What, then, is the next step to which the human mind advanced after sensationalism, idealism, and scepticism had exhausted their resources and left it in doubt? The resource, we answer, in which the mind last of all takes refuge, is *Mysticism*. Reason and reflection have apparently put forth all their power, and ended in uncertainty. The mystic thereupon rises to view, and says to the rest of the philosophers around him,—Ye have all alike mistaken the road, ye have sought for truth from a totally incorrect source, and entirely overlooked the one divine element within you, from which alone it can be derived. Reason is imperfect, it halts and stumbles at every step, when it would penetrate into the deeper recesses of pure and absolute truth. But look within you; is there not a spiritual nature there, that allies you with the spiritual world; is there not an enthusiasm which arises in all its energy, when reason grows calm and silent; is there not a light that envelops all the faculties, if you will only give yourself up to your better feelings, and listen to the voice of the God that speaks and stirs within? To this source, then, the mystic looks for a knowledge that far transcends the feeble results of our reflective faculty, and in which he would lay the basis of the highest and the truest philosophy.

In mysticism, however, as well as in the other systems I have adduced, there is undoubtedly a mixture of truth and error. It is quite possible, amidst the cold abstractions of reason, to lose sight of that inward impulse which shows itself in the flashes of genius,

in the spontaneous efforts of the imagination, and in the ardent aspirations of man's religious faculty. Every part of our intellectual life, we must remember, develops itself in its free and spontaneous, as well as it does in its conscious and reflective movements; and often the efforts of our spontaneous being have in them greater freshness and vigor than those of our calmer and more reflective. The benefit, then, which we owe to mysticism is, that it recalls our attention again and again to the spontaneous working of our highest faculties; that it points out to us the lofty emotions to which this working often gives rise; that it withdraws us from absorbing our whole attention in logical forms and processes, and points out to us the real and veritable existence of a spiritual world with which we are all closely connected, to whose laws we are all subjected, and without which our higher reason, our instinctive faith, and our fondest aspirations, would be mockery and delusion. On the other hand, mysticism is perhaps the readiest of all philosophies to fall into abuse, and to run into endless extravagances. Once let the enthusiastic element absorb the reflective, or an implicit faith be reposed in our inner sensibility, and no bounds are sufficient to mark out the delusions to which we become subject, and the wild extravagances to which the mind will resign itself. Once establish the principle, that implicit credence must be given to feeling in its varied impulses, and every strong inward suggestion may become the whispering of some celestial spirit; every vivid idea the appearance of some vision from another world; and the natural impulses of an energetic soul, become soon transformed into the ravings of religious fanaticism. Such is mysticism in its nature and origin, and such also both in its healthy and its deleterious results.\*

In reviewing the progress of these four philosophical tendencies, we cannot fail to make the observation, that they all owe their origin to some correct idea, and all succeed in eliciting some fragments of truth that would otherwise, in all probability, have been either neglected or concealed. This consideration lies at the foundation of another school of philosophy which may follow one or other of these four directions, as the case may be, to a certain extent; but

\* The reader who wishes to see these four tendencies of the philosophic spirit more fully explained and proved by an appeal to the testimony of the universal history of philosophy, will find the whole question admirably treated in Victor Cousin's "Cours de l'Histoire de la Philosophie," Lectures iv. to xii. The only imperfection we would point out in his mode of treating the subject is, that he has represented the four tendencies too much as four distinct philosophies existing in every age, rather than as so many prevailing influences or predispositions.

which, seeing in them all only the different movements of the human reason as it progresses towards the unfolding of truth, rejects in each one that which may appear extravagant or incorrect, and builds up the residuum of truth, from whatever source derived, into a new and more complete system. Such is briefly the birth and the aim of Eclecticism ; a school of philosophy which, though modest in its pretensions, and tolerant in its tone, is singularly extensive in its researches and safe in its results.

With this brief review of the philosophical tendencies which obtain in our own age, as they have more or less in every other, we shall be better enabled to observe and to estimate their various manifestations in the last two or three centuries, and better prepared to mark generally the characteristics and tendencies of speculative philosophy in these our days.

Viz Sensationalism  
Idealism  
Intuitionism

## PART I.

### ON THE PROXIMATE SOURCES OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### ON THE PROGRESS OF SENSATIONALISM FROM THE PERIOD OF BACON TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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##### SECT. I.—*Commencement of Modern Philosophy. Bacon and Hobbes.*

IN commencing our brief review of the sources from which the Philosophy of the nineteenth century has been drawn, with the age of Bacon, we are, in fact, beginning almost at the very first dawn of the modern philosophical spirit. There are only two great eras in the history of metaphysics, the ancient and the modern; whatever attempts may seem not exactly to belong to either of these, consist only of the few steps which were necessary to aid the transition from the one to the other. The scholastic age produced nothing more than a renewal, with some peculiar modifications, of ancient philosophy. That this was really the case, is evident from the spirit it evinced,—the objects it aimed at,—the authority to which it delighted to bow. Before any *new* philosophy could be originated, it was necessary that this whole system, which had held the minds of men for so many centuries in its grasp, should be combated, and in some measure overthrown; that the fetters, which had been imposed upon the human reason, should be gradually broken off, and freedom thus given it to breathe a more genial intellectual atmosphere. This necessity began to be practically realized about the middle of the fifteenth century, and during the sixteenth was vigorously acted up to. Scholasticism (derived almost entirely from one branch of the ancient philosophy, namely, the Peripatetic) was combated during that period, with weapons



derived from another and opposite school—that of the old Academy, so that the ancient contest between Aristotle and Plato was virtually revived upon the arena of modern history.

The whole of the period, indeed, which intervened between the crumbling of the edifice erected by the industry of the schoolmen, and the age of Bacon, was chiefly occupied with the revival and the further modification of the most celebrated systems of the ancient world. The authority of Aristotle being undermined, and no modern school having as yet appeared, the only resource left was to return to those other masters of antiquity who had been comparatively neglected, and to attempt the reconstruction of their various principles and reasonings into a fresh form, better suited to the altered cast and spirit of the age. Of all these ancient masters, Plato, of course, stood first and foremost, and whatever attempts were made either to introduce a more ideal philosophy than that of the schools, or to advance any of those numerous systems of theosophy and magic which abounded in the twilight of European civilization, ostensibly grounded themselves upon the authority of the old Academy.\* Some there were who, less intense in their opposition to the scholastic method, revived the Peripatetic philosophy in its ancient and original form;† and even the doctrine of the Stoics made a temporary reappearance on the stage, although it played but a brief and subordinate part.‡

Whilst these ancient doctrines were being thus recalled from their long and silent repose, there began to appear, in conjunction with them, some few attempts at independent thinking. Peter Ramus made a bold endeavor to recast the whole art and science of logic; Telesius and Campanella to reform the study of physical science; while Francis Patritius and Giordano Bruno ventured so far as to offer to the world some new and independent theories on subjects more strictly metaphysical.§ All these attempts, however, were extremely indefinite.—There was no fixed point of departure from which philosophic investigation should take its rise, no settled

\* The Platonic philosophy was patronized by the Medicis at Florence, as being more favorable to the cultivation of elegant literature than the jargon of the Aristotelian school. Nicolaus Cusanus, Marsilius Ficinus, and John Picus of Mirandula, were amongst the foremost of these new Platonics. On these, see Hallam's "Introduction to the Literature of Europe," vol. i. See also Tennemann's "Grundriss," p. 305, *et seq.*

† Peter Pomponatius was the head of the new Peripatetics in Italy, and Melancthon, the Reformer, in Germany.

‡ Lipsius and Heinsius advocated a modification of the Stoical philosophy.

§ The English reader will find some account of these in Enfield's abridgment of Brucker. For a far better account see Hallam's "Introduction to the Literature of Europe," vol. ii. chap. 3. A life of Bruno has just appeared in France.

objects at which it should aim, and no definite method according to which it should be conducted. Even astronomy itself, although it made some advances owing to the fresh stimulus then given to mathematical studies, yet was crippled in its progress for want of employing the true principles by which all physical investigations ought to be carried on. There needed some master mind who should be daring enough to trample upon the sacredness of ancient and established authority, acute enough to show the *true* objects of all philosophy, and powerful enough to furnish a new organum, and dig, as it were, a new channel, in which the philosophic spirit of the world should flow.

Two such minds arose, both of gigantic powers and almost inexhaustible resources. Each of them applied his whole strength to aid the work of reformation; and their combined influence succeeded in turning the stream of all scientific investigation into the two main directions, which it has been pursuing more or less ever since. The first of these was Lord Bacon; the next in the order, both of time and influence, was Descartes; the two together must, therefore, be regarded as forming the epoch which gave at once a final close to the ancient philosophy, and its first decided form to the new. Different as were the minds of these two great men in themselves, different as were their respective labors, and opposite as were, in many respects, the results at which they arrived, yet the writings of both were marked by one and the same great characteristic, namely, by the *spirit of method*. The most important works of Bacon, it will be remembered, were the "Instauratio Magna," and the "Novum Organum;" those of Descartes were his "Dissertatio de Methodo," and his "Meditationes de Primâ Philosophiâ." The fruitlessness of the ancient logic, as an instrument of discovery, had been abundantly proved by past experience, and the watchword which these two great thinkers of their age both uttered, and which has been ever since the guiding principle of all philosophy, was—ANALYSIS. Bacon, who gave his attention chiefly to the direction and improvement of physical science, taught to analyze *nature*, while Descartes, who aimed rather at grounding all human knowledge upon its ultimate principles, instructed how to analyze *thought*. All modern philosophy, therefore, whether it arise from the Baconian or the Cartesian point of view, bears upon it the broad outline of the analytic method. It matters not whether it be the outer or the inner world to which its investigations apply, in each case it teaches us to ob-

serve and analyze *facts*, to collect instances, and upon such observation to ground our knowledge of laws and principles. In this alone consists the unity of modern science, and from this arises its broad distinction from that of the ancient world. Every natural philosopher since Bacon has grounded his success upon an induction of the facts of the outward world; and every metaphysician, since Descartes, has advanced onwards in his department of knowledge by analyzing the facts of our inward consciousness.

It might, perhaps, be supposed that this fundamental unity of procedure ought to have given similar results, but such was far from being the case. Bacon, by concentrating his chief attention upon nature, and applying his new method or organum mainly to its interpretation, gave to his philosophy an empirical tendency, which by degrees conferred far too exclusive a value upon outward observation, and led his followers to underrate the importance of abstract ideas, and their due explication, as a means of advancing the interests of true philosophy: in a word, he laid the foundation of the modern sensationalism. Descartes, looking more deeply beneath the phenomenal world, and with an intense power of reflection, gazing upon the mind itself as the instrument and medium by which all truth is perceived, gave a new impetus to the rationalistic method of philosophizing, and thus laid the basis of the modern idealism. The great question which both sought to investigate, was that of the true ground and source of human knowledge; they both alike aimed at bringing system and unity into the varied and disjointed learning of their age; they both pointed out a "*prima philosophia*" from which all science must take its rise; but, with the same objects in view, they differed widely in their conclusions. The English philosopher regarded experience as the ultimate basis on which the superstructure of our knowledge must rest, while the French reformer traced it all back to those innate ideas and principles which, he affirmed, we have prior to, and independent of, any experience whatever. In a future chapter we shall follow the results of Cartesianism to the nineteenth century; our present object is, to trace Bacon's experimental philosophy down to the same period, *so far as it has borne upon what are more strictly called metaphysical investigations.*

And, first, we may remark that the influence of Bacon upon the progress of *speculative* philosophy was for the most part *indirect*. A few pages comparatively, would suffice to contain everything he wrote of a strictly metaphysical character. The *spirit* of his whole



philosophy, however, was such as could not fail to leave an indelible impression upon every subject lying within the range of human research. In his early life, Bacon had studied the Aristotelian philosophy as it was then taught in the "schools," and appears, while yet comparatively young in years, not only to have become convinced of its uselessness as a method of discovery, but also to have laid the basis of his new organon. From these high thoughts he emerged into the toils of active duty, and devoted the extraordinary powers with which he was endowed to the service of his country in the department of law and government. A life thus spent could not but give a strong practical turn to his mind, and must have aided in lending to his philosophy a tone, very different from that which would have resulted from so many years of calm and solitary meditation. Retiring as he did from the court and the senate-house into his study, from the busy scenes of political life to the pursuit of philosophical truth, he could hardly fail of becoming more and more convinced of the practical uselessness of the scholastic logic to a mind that requires sagacity in seizing analogies, and needs experience in collecting facts. He saw that in ordinary cases, where we have to deal with mankind, the keenest logic could not supply the place of accurate observation; and proceeded, with that comprehensiveness of mind for which he was remarkable, to generalize his views, until he evolved the conclusion, that pure scientific knowledge, as well as all other of a more ordinary and practical kind, must take its start from a diligent observation of facts.

The praise of the "Inductive method" is now in every one's mouth—we naturally ask, therefore, what is this method, as Bacon left it? That it cannot consist simply in observing a number of particulars, and then predicating any quality, which we observe in each, of the whole class, is evident; for this would make a very small extension to our knowledge of nature, where but few particulars, comparatively speaking, are accessible. There must be a fundamental conviction lying at the base of all our investigation of natural phenomena, that under similar circumstances the same antecedents will be followed by the same consequents; so that from a few observations a wide conclusion can be drawn. But a mere observation of facts, even grounded upon this conviction of the uniformity of nature's laws, Bacon still thought insufficient; for it had in truth been practised centuries before he announced the "Novum Organum." His great object was, first, to remove out



of the road the obstacles which tended to impede the progress of science; and then so to systematize the rules and principles of induction, as to supersede the *guesses* of experience, and arrive by a sure and rapid road at the discovery of truth. To accomplish this, says Bacon, we must first collect a *natural history*; that is, whatever be the subject we intend to investigate, we must first set down all the facts we can gain upon it. Having done this we must classify these into tables, so that we may expunge those which are useless to the question, and gather the "vintage" of those which are really significant. These significant facts are further to be scrutinized with respect to their *relative* value and import, and to be illustrated, wherever it is practicable, by actual experiments. This being done, the law of the phenomena or "*latens processus*," if *causes* be the object of our search, and the form or "*latens schematismus*," if the *constitution* of bodies be our search, will at once begin to appear. Thus our knowledge must rise from the bare facts, as they are presented to the senses, upwards, through different degrees of generalization, till the most general form thereof is ascertained, and the top stone of the pyramid laid upon it.\*

This, then, being in brief the Baconian *method*, in what light are we to estimate it? Its many excellencies all have admitted to be unquestionable. Its primary care to clear away prejudices,† and *make silence within* in order to listen for truth, was conceived in the loftiest spirit of sound wisdom. Its constant inculcation of observation and experiment overturned all those false attempts at *construing* nature on *a priori* principles, which had rendered the vastest exertions of many mighty minds entirely nugatory. Its infinite effort to scrutinize facts, and weigh their relative value, shows us how jealously we are to watch the accuracy of all our actual observations, and how patiently estimate their signification; while its recommendation to investigate the more occult processes and forms of things, urges us on to study nature even beyond the limits

\* Bacon's first work was "The Advancement of Learning." In this his ideas respecting the reform of philosophy were somewhat clearly sketched out. He next announced the "Instauratio Magna," the plan of which, in six parts, may be said to include all his philosophical writings. In the treatise "De Augmentis Scientiarum," (an expansion of the "Advancement," ) we have a complete review of the different branches of human knowledge, as introductory to the whole system. In the "Novum Organum," or second part, we have the *method* of scientific investigation propounded. The third part of the plan was the "Sylva Sylvarum," or Natural History, published posthumously, which was to supply facts. The fourth, fifth, and sixth parts, termed respectively "Scala Intellectus," "Anticipationes Philosophiæ," and "Philosophia Secunda," are wanting. See his "Distributio Operis," placed at the beginning of his philosophical writings. Vol. vii. of his *Works*, London, Baynes, 1824.

† *Idola*—false appearances not Idols. *Vid.* Hallam, vol. ii. p. 408, &c.

to which mere outward observation can reach. But, perhaps, the most valuable and original part of Bacon's method, is that in which he points out the necessity of a *gradual ascent* in the process of generalization, in order that we may arrive, at length, at the highest point of human research. "Duæ viæ sunt," such are his own words, "atque esse possunt ad inquirendam et inveniendam veritatem. Altera a sensu et particularibus advolat ad axiomata maxime generalia, atque ex iis principiis eorumque immotâ veritate judicat, et invenit axiomata media; atque hæc via in usu est. Altera a sensu et particularibus excitat axiomata ascendendo continenter et gradatim, ut ultimo loco perveniatur ad maxime generalia, quæ via vera est sed intentata." One of the main defects in the study of natural philosophy, previous to Bacon, was the constant effort to rise from a few *particular* facts to the highest generalizations. These efforts Bacon terms "anticipationes naturæ," and points out as above the existence of these "axiomata media," which must always serve as stepping-stones to the reason in its arduous path to the summit of the pyramid.\*

Such are the excellencies of Bacon's method; but it has also its defects. First of all, there can be little doubt but that Bacon overestimated the real value of his new organum, as it regards the discovery of truth. He thought it so powerful an instrument as almost to supersede the value of philosophical genius, and to reduce all minds nearly to the same level.† In this he certainly underrated the necessity of that wondrous sagacity (as displayed in Newton) which seizes analogies, and puts us, by a kind of intuitive foresight, on the right road for the true interpretation of facts.‡ This led him again to lay more stress upon the arrangement of the facts themselves, than upon the elucidation of those rational *conceptions* by which alone they can be explained and generalized. It must be admitted, however, that this defect might have been in great measure corrected, had he completed the plan marked out in the last three parts of the "Instauratio Magna." Another main defect in the Baconian system was, its almost entire neglect of *deduction*. It did not take into consideration, that a sagacious mind may often rise, all at once, *per saltum*, to a general principle, and then reason downwards so as to *deduce* those "axiomata media," in which our real knowledge mainly consists. This error,

\* *Vid.* Whewell's "Philosophy of Induction," vol. ii. p. 395.

† *Nov. Org.* I. Aph. 61.

‡ *Vid.* Mr. Macaulay's article in the *Edinburgh Review*, No. 132.

Mr. Mill conjectures might have arisen from Bacon's ignorance and disparagement of mathematical science.\* Lastly, the method was defective, and necessarily so, in that practical wisdom which results from a long acquaintance with the actual processes of philosophical research. The great benefit Bacon conferred upon the world arose from the *spirit of his writings* as a whole—from the admirable wisdom which they exhibited—and the impressive manner in which they inculcated upon all, the duty of repressing narrow prejudices on the one hand, and a too wide ambition on the other. Added to this, he saw distinctly the existence of the two elements of all human knowledge—the Sensational and the Ideal, and perceived that science can only be constructed by the due combination of them both; the facts given by the one being interpreted through the conceptions furnished by the other. To Bacon, therefore, we must attribute the honor of having first sketched out the true order of philosophical research, and foreseen the splendid results which its application has educed in the increase of all the comforts and conveniences of human life, as well as in the general progression afforded by it to the moral and intellectual culture of mankind. It was under the deep impression of the truth and power of his views, that he announced them as the “great instauration” which was to introduce a new era into the intellectual history of the world.

Our main object, however, is now to see what was the influence which Bacon exerted upon the progress of *speculative philosophy*. And it might be asked, first of all, did Bacon *intend* his method to be applicable to the moral as well as the physical sciences? This question, there can be little doubt, must be answered in the affirmative: for not only does he include logic, ethics, politics, and metaphysics in his work “*De Augmentis Scientiarum*,” as branches open to the renewed investigation of the human mind; but he has some direct passages which touch upon the very point in question. It is only necessary to quote the following, which we translate from the first book of the “*Novum Organum*.” “Perhaps any one,” he says, “might doubt, rather than object, whether we intend to perfect by our method, not only natural philosophy, but also the other sciences, such as Logic, Ethics, and Politics. *We reply, that we understand the things we have spoken to be applicable to them all; and just as the common logic, which governs things by the syllogism, not only pertains to the natural but to all the sciences, so also ours, which proceeds by induction, embraces them all likewise.*

\* See this point admirably discussed in Mill's “*Logic*,” vol. ii. p. 524, *et seq.*



For we may construct a history and tables of discovery concerning anger, fear, shame, and the like, just as we do concerning the scenes of civil life ; nor less concerning the mental operations of memory, composition, division, judgment, and the rest, than about cold, or heat, or light, or vegetation, and the like."

Here, then, is sufficient evidence that Bacon did not *intend* to exclude these subjects from the sweep of his method. At the same time, it is no less evident that he applied his principles to psychological investigations with great reserve, and even timidity. For, immediately after the passage just quoted, he says,—“Our mode of discovery, by means of a prepared and arranged history, does not aim *so much* at the movements and operations of mind, like the common logic, but rather at *the nature of things*; we so train the mind that it may apply itself by apt methods to the nature of things.” There are other passages, moreover, in which Bacon seems absolutely to have distrusted his own method when applied to mental philosophy. “I hold,” he remarks, in his “Advancement of Learning,” “that this knowledge must, in the end, be bounded by religion, else it will be subject to deceit and delusion.” And again, still more explicitly, he remarks,—“*Mens humana si agat in materiam, naturam rerum, et opera Dei contemplando, pro modo naturæ operatur, atque ab eâ determinatur; si ipsa in se vertitur, tanquam aranea texens telam, tum demum indeterminata est, et parit telas quasdam doctrinæ, tenuitate fili, operisque mirabiles, sed quoad usum frivolas et inanes.*” Had he sought to break through the thin webs of the scholastic philosophy in this, as he did in so many other points, he might have proved here also, not like the spider, but like the silkworm, that weaves from within a web of excellent utility and marvellous beauty.

To estimate, however, the influence of Bacon upon the progress of speculative philosophy, we must not only consider the adaptation of his method to elucidate and extend it, but gather up some of his own direct remarks upon metaphysical questions. The third book of the treatise “*De Augmentis Scientiarum*,” gives us ample data on which to ground our opinion of Bacon’s views respecting these more abstract subjects. It appears from this portion of his plan, that Bacon by no means wished to confine his philosophy to *mere phenomena*, but affirmed that it should be our constant endeavor to grasp the very *forms* of things; *i. e.* that we should attempt to comprehend the mode of their existence, and the laws of their secret operation. He compares knowledge to a pyramid, the



base of which consists of particular facts, the vertex of which is the link between the creation and the Creator, while the stage immediately below the vertex, is that branch of science which comes distinctly within the idea of metaphysics. Let those who claim Bacon as the apostle of *positivism*, give us an interpretation of this whole division of his system, in consistency with their principles ;—for our part we look upon Bacon as having been much too far-sighted to describe so narrow a circle, as our modern naturalists do, within which to confine the excursions of the human reason. At the same time it must be confessed, that a very *inconsiderable* amount of his attention was given to these higher questions, that the doctrine of final causes was depreciated, and that the whole framework of his *Organum* was far more adapted to the investigations of physical than of metaphysical science. The great want of the age in which he lived was unquestionably a *knowledge of facts*, and, therefore, it was to this point that he had directed his chief attention. When, however, we read what he *has* written respecting metaphysical investigations, we may easily suppose, that had he lived to complete the great scheme of his *Instauratio Magna*, this ideal portion of his philosophy would have been far more fully developed.

Regarding, then, the Baconian philosophy *as it now stands*, we may sum up in few words the influence it was calculated to exert. First, the authority of the master himself led to the very sparing application of his method to psychological investigations, without, however, excluding them altogether. But, secondly, the recommendation to search into the *forms* of things, kept alive the belief in the importance of metaphysical analysis ; although, at the same time, it was thrown into the background, by the vastly preponderating stress which was laid upon purely experimental processes. Whilst, therefore, all the branches of human knowledge were benefited by the eminently wise and practical spirit that pervaded his writings, yet their final result was to elevate natural philosophy above every other department ; to place the empirical element in a too prominent position, and thus to give a clear ultimate tendency in favor of sensationalism.\*

\* It is very interesting, and somewhat curious, to read the different comments which many men of the first ability have made upon Bacon's writings. In the third volume of the *Edinburgh Review*, there is a somewhat remarkable discussion carried on between Dugald Stewart and the then Editor, as to the applicability of Bacon's method to the moral sciences. Stewart's defence of Bacon, in this respect, may be seen also in the Preliminary Dissertation to his "Philosophical Essays," chap. ii. p. 40, *et seq.*

Professor Playfair, in his Preliminary Dissertation, (*Encyc. Met. Appendix*), considers that Bacon ran too far into the region of metaphysics. Dr. Whewell (*Phil*

The field, then, was now fairly open. The human reason had, in the person of Bacon, asserted for the department of science its independence of all former authority; the search after the foundations of truth was commenced by a master mind; but with this the tendency was already manifest to fall back upon the experience of our senses as the ultimate basis of the whole. It was not the intention of Bacon, indeed, as we have seen, to exclude all metaphysical conceptions, nor would he have sanctioned the consequences which were soon drawn from his decided leaning to the objective; but the influence which his writings were capable of producing upon the progress of *mental and moral philosophy*, was soon rendered apparent in the works of one of his warmest friends and followers. Hobbes, who had drunk deeply into the spirit of his master, began to philosophize just where *he* had left off. The master himself, looking far into the distance, occupied his whole genius in framing the *method* of future research. Many, indeed, were soon found to carry out this method in the department of physics to the most splendid results; but Hobbes was the only pupil who began by applying it in its most empirical character to metaphysics, morals, and politics.

The main features of the philosophy of Hobbes may be sketched out in a very few words. Bacon had attached so high an importance to experience, that it was regarded as the main, if not the only source of our real knowledge. Hobbes proceeded to develop this Baconian principle in such a manner, that he made *sensation* the real basis of every mental operation, the sole originator of our ideas, the sole medium and test of truth.\* As, therefore, we can perceive through sensation only what is *material*, he concluded that matter is the only reality, and that whatever exists *to us* must accordingly be a part of the material universe. The whole process of scientific investigation was thus reduced to the *doctrine of bodies*, beyond which, he maintained, there can be no knowledge

of Induc.) shows, that while Bacon took hold upon both the handles of science, the Empirical and the Ideal, yet he worked with the former far more energetically than with the latter. Mr. Macaulay, in the *Edinburgh Review*, No. 132, pays a splendid tribute to Bacon's genius, but casts great doubts upon the *originality* of his method. Mr. Hallam defends both the originality and utility of the method, but thinks that he fell into indistinctness from attempting more than he could ever accomplish.—("Lit. of Europe," vol. ii. page 426.) Mr. Mill, in his "System of Logic," pays homage to Bacon as the father of *Induction*, but shows that he erred from want of seeing the real nature and uses of *Deduction*.

The conclusion from the whole seems to be, that the inductive system itself was involved in the spirit of the age; and that Bacon's merit was, to bring it out prominently to view, and encircle it by the profundity of his practical wisdom, and the impressive, the almost prophetic authority, of his philosophic style.

\* See "*Leviathan*," chap. i.

whatever, accessible to the human mind. This knowledge, however, does not refer simply to the *existence* of bodies, but also to their *changes*, of all which changes the ultimate principle is *motion*. The doctrine of bodies, therefore, includes the knowledge of all phenomena in relation to their probable causes; and of all possible causes as known from their observed effects. In other words, the facts being given by the senses, we have to discover by our reason all the consequences which will flow from them under every variety of circumstance. Such, according to Hobbes, is the proper province and the sole aim of true philosophy.

But now comes the chief peculiarity of his system. Bodies, he says, are divided into two kinds, *natural* bodies and *political* bodies. The former comprehend not only the whole of what we term external nature, but likewise those other existences which we variously call mind, soul, or spirit. This first division of philosophy, therefore, is so explained as to include the physical and mathematical sciences, Psychology and Logic, besides a number of subordinate branches.\*

In *Physics*, Hobbes followed his illustrious predecessor, inculcating generally the necessity of observation, and manifesting with it a strong preference for the atomistic doctrine, which he probably owed to his intimacy with Gassendi. On this subject, however, it is not our business now to trespass; and it is, happily, of less consequence to do so, because the path of experimental philosophy was not the one in which our author delighted to walk; so much was this the case, that he even ridiculed the Royal Society of London for confining their attention so much to minute experiments.

The *Psychology* of Hobbes (in which, according to his system, the whole of metaphysics is included) is highly remarkable, not indeed on account of its intrinsic value, but remarkable when viewed in connection with the age at which it was propounded. The mind itself he viewed as wholly material, the phenomena of consciousness being the direct result of our organization. The one great and fundamental fact of mind is sensation:† which is nothing more or less than the effect of material objects around us, exerted by means of pressure or impact upon that material organization which we term *the mind*.

\* *Vid.* the 9th chap. of the "*Leviathan*," in which we have a synoptic view of all the objects of philosophical research, constructed on the principle that science is the knowledge of consequences.

† We have here the fundamental principle of the school of Condillac.



Sensation, however, gives rise to sundry other phenomena of consciousness, which deserve particular attention. The movement of the particles of matter (in which sensation consists) gradually ceases, leaving, indeed, an impression of the thing, but far less vivid than during the actual period of impact. This "decaying sense," according to Hobbes, is Imagination, (or conception;) but if we view it in connection with the fact of its being the lingering image of something past, then it is *memory*. Memory and Imagination, therefore, are the same things, only viewed from a different stand-point.\* This leads to some further remarks in which he develops the doctrine of the association of Ideas.†

The next great phenomenon, upon which Hobbes lays amazing stress, is that of *Language*. So high an importance does he attach to *words*, that but for them he does not conceive that men could ever have lived in society: nay, reasoning itself is made so dependent upon terms, that he affirms the simplest mathematical truth to have been absolutely undiscoverable without them.‡ This leads at once to Hobbes' theory of knowledge. Knowledge, he says, is of two kinds. First, we gain direct impressions of external things by sensation, and this is "knowledge original;" then we use words to denote things, and form them into propositions. When these propositions are correct, then we have another kind of knowledge, one which, though arising primarily from the senses, is mediated by the understanding. Understanding is the faculty which perceives the relation between words and things;—and *truth* and *falsehood*, therefore, are nothing more than the agreement or disagreement of words among themselves, being terms applicable only to verbal propositions.§

To Logic, Hobbes devoted a considerable share of attention. The peculiarity of his logical system lies in the theory, that reasoning is merely a numerical calculation. As the *dictum* upon which the syllogism depends turns simply upon the relation of a whole to its parts, Hobbes considered, that adding and subtracting expressed the whole process of ratiocination, *words* being the ciphers employed for the purpose. Error in reasoning, he showed to arise only from the want of definitions and the wrong employment of names: here, therefore, as in every other part of his system, the extreme results of nominalism are unhesitatingly appropriated.||

\* *Vid.* Lev. chap. ii. † Lev. chap. iii. ‡ Lev. chap. iv. § Lev. chap. iv.

|| Mr. Hallam defends this theory of Hobbes from the attack of Stewart—"Lit. of Europe," ii. p. 474.



The Ethics of Hobbes are exactly what we should expect to flow from his sensational principles in metaphysics. If every thought is nothing more than a compound of sensations, then good and evil can be nothing more than expressions for pleasure and pain, that is, for agreeable or disagreeable sensations. There is nothing on this theory simply and absolutely good—nothing simply or absolutely evil; they are both relative to my own individual constitution; and all practical ethics, therefore, must consist in rules for the avoidance of the one, and the attainment of the other.\* Moreover, as it does not depend upon ourselves to determine what feelings shall be pleasurable and what painful, it follows that our desires and volitions (which are the same thing, and both forms of sensation) must be irresistibly determined by motives from without, and that man must, therefore, be absolutely and unconditionally the creature of necessity.

This leads us to the fundamental principle of Hobbes' political theory. As good and evil are identical with pleasure and pain, and as all men necessarily desire the one and shun the other, so nature herself dictates the right to every man of doing whatever he may think conducive to these ends, and in this manner of securing for himself all the means of physical enjoyment he is able, at whatever expense to his fellow man. The natural state of man, therefore, must necessarily be a state of warfare, in which all are struggling to advance their own selfish interests, every man's hand being against his brother, and his brother's against him. In brief, *might* and *right* are convertible terms. Experience, however, teaches that a state of universal warfare is a state of universal suffering, and reason accordingly dictates that we should seek for peace as the more conducive to human happiness. Hence the origin of law, government, and other social institutions which are simply intended to be antagonists to man's natural selfishness. The very aim and purport of government being simply to control the will of the individual, and erect a leviathan power to which man's selfishness must bow, the end of it is answered just in proportion as the power thus established is mighty to coerce or restrain. Hence an absolute monarchy is the very perfection of human government, and ought to have the supreme decision over everything connected with Law, Morals, and Religion.†

On the subject of Religion, Hobbes laid himself open to much

\* "Leviathan," chap. vi.

† These political principles were first propounded in the Treatises "De Cive" and "De Corpore Politico." They are reproduced, however, connectedly in the "Leviathan."

obloquy, more especially as he attacked the clergy themselves, as well as their principles, in the most caustic and severe remarks. He admitted that the natural desire we possess of investigating *causes*, leads us to attribute some vast and incomprehensible cause to the universe around us. As, however, we can conceive of nothing which does not present itself to us as a sensuous image, it followed by necessity that we can have no real conception of a Supreme Being; that infinity, in every form, is a mere negation.

We cannot avoid quoting the striking words with which Mr. Hallum sums up his view of Hobbism generally:—"The political system of Hobbes, like his moral system, of which, in fact, it is only a portion, sears up the heart. It takes away the sense of wrong that has consoled the wise and good in their dangers, the proud appeal of innocence under oppression, like that of Prometheus to the elements, uttered to the witnessing world, to coming ages, to the just ears of Heaven. It confounds the principles of moral approbation, the notions of good and ill desert, in a servile adolatriy of the monstrous leviathan it creates, and, after sacrificing all right at the altar of power, denies to the Omnipotent the prerogative of dictating the laws of his own worship."\*

Such, briefly, was the superstructure, metaphysical, moral, and political, which Hobbes built up with great ingenuity and ability upon the Baconian principles. Far would Bacon have been from following his pupil in these conclusions; but it can hardly be disputed that the germ of them was to be found in that empirical tendency, which runs more or less through the whole of his philosophy.

The genius which Hobbes manifested both in his style of writing, and in the severe logic by which he built up his whole system, from its ground-principles to its completion, no one has ever denied. Whilst, however, great ability was displayed in ALL his writings, the chief strength of his mind, especially in the latter period of his life, was evidently concentrated in his moral and political works, which, as they gained most celebrity, raised also the greatest opposition. The metaphysics of Hobbes, indeed, can by no means be considered brilliant efforts of genius, nor can they possibly serve as a basis upon which any deeply thinking mind would rest in its search after the fundamental principles of human nature. Yet Hobbes was undoubtedly, of all the adherents of the Baconian

\* A full and beautiful edition of Hobbes' *Works* has been published by Sir W. Molesworth. London, 1839.

school, the greatest writer of his age; for the works of Gassendi, which now became extremely popular on the Continent of Europe, can hardly be regarded as equal to them in philosophical acumen, and there are no others able to dispute the field. In fact, the *metaphysician* of the Baconian philosophy was yet to appear, before the analytic method could be said to be strictly and successfully applied to the science of the human mind.

It was just at this time, while there was a perpetual conflict of opinions going on between the school of Hobbes on the one side, and those who, like Cumberland, were seeking to lay an immovable foundation for morality and religion on the other, that a company of scholars within the University of Oxford were assembled by chance at the chambers of *John Locke*. Finding themselves perplexed and baffled in their discussions, it occurred to Locke that they were taking the wrong road to arrive at truth; that the first thing to be done was not to analyze things themselves, or doctrines themselves, to their simplest and most abstract forms, but to investigate the faculties of the human mind, in order to see what objects lie within its reach, and what beyond it. From that day is dated the commencement of a work which was destined to exert a greater influence upon metaphysical science than any which had appeared since the age of Aristotle and Plato—I mean the “*Essay on the Human Understanding*.” We must proceed, therefore, to investigate succinctly, but as clearly as possible, the real tendency of this immortal work, and to estimate the effect it produced upon the progress of speculative philosophy.

## SECTION II.—*Criticism of Locke.*

First of all, it is abundantly evident, that Locke is to be placed amongst those independent thinkers, who, instead of grounding their opinions upon any previous authority, determine rather to seek anew for themselves a solid foundation for human knowledge. In so doing he was evidently following, and that boldly, in the track which had been previously opened by the writings of Bacon. When the spirit of independent thinking is once acquired, there are, of course, many different directions which it may follow, and according to the path first struck out, will ever be the method and character of the whole subsequent investigation.

As to the *plan* which Locke proposed to follow, we are not left



in doubt for a single moment ; it is clear and decisive from the first page, and indeed is made manifest in the very circumstances which gave rise to his "Essay." He affirms in the very outset, that it is of no use to search deeply into any subject, with the hope of attaining ultimate truth, before we have estimated aright the *instrument* we have to employ ; that is, to use his own words, "before we have found out the powers of the understanding, the extent to which they reach, and the points in which they fail."\* It is impossible to indicate more clearly than this his fixed opinion, that the foundation of all philosophy must be found in *Psychology*, and that the starting-point must ever be an accurate observation and analysis of the facts or phenomena of our own consciousness. Here we see at once that Locke had imbibed not only Bacon's independence, but also *the spirit* of the Baconian method ; that he both avoided and despised (as he tells us in almost the first paragraph†) the fruitless speculations of former philosophers to ascertain such things as "the essence of the mind," or "by what motions of our spirits, or changes in our bodies, we experience sensations," or to solve any similar question, the evidence of which does not come directly within the range of our own consciousness ; but that, on the contrary, he considered the study of mind as well as of matter to have reference simply to such actual phenomena as can be observed, classified, and correctly reasoned upon.

But then arises the inquiry, Can we observe the phenomena of mind as surely as we do those of the material world, and can we equally regard them as real objects of science ? That we can make observations upon the facts of our inward life must be evident to every reflecting mind ; for what do we mean when we speak of consciousness, except that there is something or other passing within us of which we are conscious ? Everything, therefore, that passes through the mind, of whatever nature it be, may be regarded a legitimate object of mental philosophy ; it is *a phenomenon*, and as such can be set down upon our roll as a real and unquestionable fact, equally valid with those of any other science.

Locke takes it for granted, accordingly, as a thing resting on the direct evidence of our consciousness, that man *has* an understanding, that if his consciousness assures him of anything, it assures him that he does think, and, if he think, that there must be something within, which is the immediate object of his thoughts. Such

\* Essay, chap. i. sec. 4.

† Essay, chap. i. sec. 2.



object, whatever it be, he terms an *idea*, the proper definition of which accordingly he considers to be, "Anything with which our minds are immediately occupied when we think."\* Thus the whole science of the human understanding, or, as it may be otherwise expressed, the whole search after the true principles of human knowledge, is reduced simply to the *study of ideas*.

This study he proposes to prosecute in a threefold manner. He proposes, first, to investigate the *origin* of our ideas, and the means by which we acquire them; that being done, he offers, secondly, to show what knowledge we possess by means of our ideas, and to determine its certainty, evidence, and extent; and then, as there are objects in the mind which we cannot call objects of knowledge, but the reality of which rests solely upon opinion or faith, he proposes, thirdly, to examine the grounds and the degrees of our assent in matters of this nature.†

Now, what does this sketch (which Locke gives us in his introduction) of the course he intended to follow in the work at large indicate? It shows us most clearly his full conviction, that the *phenomena* of the mind itself must be our first study; and that the ideas we may be found to possess within our consciousness must be thoroughly probed and traced to their very origin, before we raise any inquiry as to their certainty, their validity, or their accurate correspondence with any external object to which we may suppose them to answer. In a word, it exhibits the great principle, that both logic and ontology are out of place, until we have laid a foundation for them in *psychology*. When we have once learned to appreciate the true nature of our faculties, and have observed and classified all the inward phenomena of our consciousness, then, first, we may begin to mark out in order, the abstract forms which our thoughts and reasonings assume—that is, to create a science of formal logic; and then, first, also, may we begin to inquire how far these subjective ideas are the signs and proofs of objective existences,—that is, how far we can lay securely the ground-principles of ontology. So far Locke was true to his proposed method, so far he applied admirably the Baconian system to the study of the human mind, and bid fair to build up a superstructure of metaphysical philosophy upon a fixed and immovable basis.‡

In order, then, to point out where, and in what manner, Locke departed from the principles which he at first laid down for his

\* Essay, chap. i. sec. 8.

† Ibid. chap. i. sec. 3.

‡ See Cousin's "Cours de l'Histoire de la Phil." Leçon 16, in which Locke's Methodology is very fully discussed.

guidance, let us for a moment consider what the *new organum* of philosophy, as derived from Bacon and employed by Locke himself, really is. It contains, as we have shown, two movements; first, the observation of phenomena just as nature gives them; and then the explication and recomposition of them, in such a manner as to bring to view *general laws*. Now, fidelity to these principles imperatively demanded of Locke, when he applied them to the subject of his Essay, to commence by a thorough investigation of *all* the phenomena of the human understanding, as they are given to us in our own consciousness; having done this, he might safely have proceeded, either to classify them, or to draw any conclusions that seemed warranted. But what plan does he actually pursue? Instead of commencing by such a careful induction of facts, he makes in the outset no induction at all; he seeks to determine neither the number nor the characteristics of our ideas, but starts at once by searching for their *origin*. This was the point in which he first of all departed from the true method of philosophizing, and which led him, on many occasions, as we shall soon see, into no little inaccuracy and confusion.\*

There is not, in fact, a single branch of inductive science in the world, which would give correct results, if pursued in the same manner as Locke pursued the study of mind. Suppose, for example, that the illustrious astronomer of the same age, had investigated the architecture of the heavens on the same principle as Locke did the construction and powers of the human understanding; suppose that, instead of commencing with a distinct knowledge of the phenomena of the heavens, he had first applied all his energies to search into the *origin* of those which present themselves confusedly and in the aggregate to the mind of any ordinary observer, what, we ask, would have been the result? He must, in that case, necessarily have formed hypotheses unwarranted, or, at least, unproved, by facts; and, instead of casting a lustre upon his name, his age, and his country, would have, probably, taken his rank amongst those ingenious speculators who had before him beaten the path to oblivion. The method which Newton followed taught him to reject all previous hypotheses as so many obstacles in the path of true science; it taught him, before he sought the origin of any phenomena, to examine what they really were, what characteristics they bore, and how many of a similar nature might be ranged side by side to throw light upon each other. He knew that, to neglect *one* fact, or to

\* See Cousin's " *Histoire de la Phil.*" p. 253. Brussels edition, 1840.

imagine *one*, were both fatal errors in inductive science, which might lead us in the end far away from the truth.

Precisely of this nature, however, was Locke's first deviation from the true Baconian principles. In commencing by seeking for the *origin* of our ideas, he was actually investigating the source of phenomena, of which he had not yet determined either the character or the number, investigating them, moreover, as is almost inevitable in such cases, under the influence of several false hypotheses. The result was, that his conclusion upon this question was necessarily *a guess*; or, if we would name it philosophically, an hypothesis which *might* be true or might not. Instead of classifying all our ideas as they exist in their present mature condition in the mind, and then drawing from such an extensive and complete view of the case, a valid conclusion as to their primitive state or origin, he drew his inference before he had examined his data, and thus made the observations square to the theory, instead of drawing the theory from his observations. To lay a firm basis for mental science by such a method, was, and ever must be, absolutely impossible; for, when once we have an hypothesis ready formed, we soon become too prejudiced in its favor to judge impartially of any facts which may seem to militate against it; and even, if all the facts we may happen to observe do agree with it, yet, until we have made a systematic induction of them *all*, and brought them one by one to the proper test, it is impossible to regard our position as proved beyond the danger of being overturned by some hitherto unheeded phenomenon. But it is not an *uncertain* position which will do for the corner-stone of a whole system of philosophy.\*

\* As this point of the criticism on Locke has been strongly contested by a late reviewer (see Prospective Review, Nov. 1846,) I shall add one or two further illustrations of it. The reviewer affirms that Locke *did* understand the true method of philosophical research; that he stated his thesis first, and brought up his facts afterwards; that the case of Newton is an "unfortunate" one, as *he* started with *no* induction of facts, but simply with the two laws of Kepler; and finally, that Locke assumed *no* data but sensation and reflection. Let us briefly examine these four points.

That Locke was imbued with the general spirit of the Baconian Methodology I have admitted, and even affirmed—that he saw its *full* application to the investigation of mind, I cannot allow. What was Bacon's method? First, to make a Natural History of Facts; next to classify those facts; thirdly, to investigate their relative weight and significance; and then, lastly, to rise through the several stages of generalization to the highest law of the phenomena in question. In Locke we have, it is true, many psychological facts scattered through his Essay; but this certainly cannot be called a *systematic arrangement* of the phenomena of consciousness, nor would any one, who proceeded upon the strictly inductive method, make the whole of the facts adduced, from the very first, cluster around a theory as Locke did. He would rather repress this tendency to "anticipate nature" until the facts were better known. But, says the reviewer, may not a man state his thesis *first*, and *then* bring up his facts to bear upon it? Certainly he may; but the question is, *did Locke do this?* Far from it. Respecting no book, perhaps, could such a remark be more "unfortunate." Locke



Having thus pointed out the error which Locke appears at the outset to have fallen into in the method of conducting his examination, we may now proceed to a criticism of the different portions of his work, and show in what manner this first aberration led him into subsequent confusion. As, however, the whole of the former part of the Essay is occupied in discussing the question of the origin of our ideas, we must make a few remarks on this expression, to pave the way for a better comprehension of Locke's whole theory. The term *origin* may be taken in two senses, essentially

did not begin to write *after* he had well digested the subject; so that he could lay down his mature conclusion at the beginning as a thesis, and then systematically support it. Locke wrote, in order to learn. He philosophized as the book went on. For eighteen years he was writing upon it, and there are evident indications of his views wavering and sometimes changing as the work proceeded. He was no reader of the History of Philosophy; his Essay, in fact, contains simply the process of his own philosophic development. Can it be said of such a book that the conclusion of the whole, the thesis in which it was all to result, could be laid down first, *the facts having been already well arranged and scrutinized*? Impossible. Locke began to philosophize, not simply to write with a certain theory; and that theory colored the facts he adduced throughout the whole work.

Again, let us look at the case of Newton. The reviewer affirms that Newton began with no systematic view of the facts of astronomy, but simply with Kepler's two laws. Now let it be remembered, that from the age of Ptolemy most diligent observations had been going on from time to time of the phenomena of the heavens. Any one acquainted with the history of astronomy knows, that the number of observations taken by the astronomers of the age of Kepler was prodigious; that it was by means of these observations that the science advanced; and that, without them, Kepler's laws would never have been established. Newton came *by inheritance* into all these observations; the very knowledge of Kepler's laws really involved them. He began his own investigations, therefore, not only with a distinct idea of the actual phenomena of the case; but, what is more, with certain deductions from those phenomena already established and verified. To say that Newton conducted his investigations independently of a most wide and patient colligation of facts as the basis, I cannot but think, involves a total oversight of the real foundation upon which the Newtonian system rests. To be further assured how patiently the great philosopher *observed* before he reasoned, we have only to trace his discoveries in those subjects where he could not fall back upon a mass of *previous* observations, and we find that the colligation of facts, even by his extraordinarily sagacious mind, was most laboriously carried on before he ventured to theorize or to *deduce*. No one, assuredly, can maintain that Locke grounded his "thesis" of the nature of the human understanding, which stands *at the outset of his philosophy*, upon a survey of the facts of consciousness at all comparable to the survey which Newton *inherited* of the phenomena of the heavens. Finally, the reviewer affirms, that Locke assumed no data besides sensation and reflection. We reply, that he *assumed* quite gratuitously his whole theory of ideas as representations of outward reality. This theory, as Dr. Reid has shown, lay at the very basis of his philosophy, and, so far from leaving the path of psychological discovery clear, presented obstacles to it at every step. Had Newton adopted the Ptolemaic theory of the heavens as a recognized fact, it is needless to say how it must have stood in the way of all advancement. Of a similar nature was the obstruction which the ideal system actually presented in the philosophical speculations of Locke. Added to this, he was encumbered, perhaps almost unconsciously, with the notion of animal spirits as being the agents in sensation, and with the doctrine of impact as being the only method by which one object can affect another. Of the justice, then, of the original criticism, I still feel perfectly convinced—at any rate, to prove its incorrectness demands a view of the question very different from the plausible, but as it seems to me "loose," strain of remark I have commented upon. In truth, what we want, to the present day, is a faithful psychology strictly inductive, and unencumbered with any hypothesis. On this subject see Jouffroy on the Method of Philosophical Study, prefixed to his translation of Stewart's "Outlines of Moral Philosophy."



different from each other. It may mean the *cause* of anything being produced, or it may imply simply the *occasion* of its production. Between the real cause, and the occasion of any phenomenon, there is a wide diversity. The one implies a *producing power*, the other only some *condition* upon which this power comes into exercise. If I cast a grain of corn into the earth, the occasion of its springing up and producing plant, ear, and grain, is the warmth and moisture of the soil in which it is buried; but this is by no means the cause. The cause lies in the mysterious vital power which the seed contains within itself; the other is but the condition upon which this cause produces the effect. I am aware that a sensationalist, who rejects the idea of power, would repudiate this distinction, and regard all effects similar to that above described, as being brought about by a composition of causes. We still maintain, however, that in the majority of instances a valid ground for the distinction is manifest, and that the power by which an event is brought into being is clearly separable from the conditions under which that power is put forth.\* When we speak, therefore, of the origin of our ideas, we must ever take heed to avoid the ambiguity which lurks in the term. The cause of any idea is the inward faculty from which it *immediately* takes its rise; and this is in the proper, and in the only proper sense, its true origin. But man, we know, is a unity; the different powers and faculties of his mind all co-exist in one subject, and develop themselves simultaneously, working and interworking together throughout all their operations. It so happens, therefore, that the action of one faculty often depends upon another, and only comes into play when thus stimulated. Hence the ideas which owe their origin, properly so called, to one of these faculties, may owe their occasion to another; in which case great care is requisite to separate that faculty which gives rise to them *directly*, from those which have to do only indirectly with their production. Thus, to give an example, we should attribute the abstract conception of space *directly* to the operation of our reason; while yet we regard sensation, or an actual contact with the material world, as absolutely necessary in order to incite the rational faculty to the formation of such a conception.†

Now, this obvious distinction Locke appears to have entirely

\* The real existence of a *nisus* or effort in every effect beyond the mere visible antecedents, will be illustrated hereafter.

† See some excellent remarks upon this point in Stewart's "Philosophy of the Human Mind," chap. i. sec. 4. See also his "Philosophical Essays," Essay I. chap. ii.

overlooked. Where he found a difficulty in showing the direct dependence of any idea upon experience, he soon discovered the means of showing its indirect dependence upon it, and having done this, he incorrectly concluded, that the whole of our knowledge could be derived from this one source. We owe it mainly to Kant, that this fallacy has been thoroughly probed and refuted. In the very first paragraph of his great work ("The Critic of Pure Reason") he points us to experience as the *occasion* of every possible conception which the mind forms; but proves afterwards most convincingly, that the true cause of many of our conceptions is to be found solely in the original constitution of the understanding or of the reason. This distinction, then, premised, we may proceed to consider the sentiments which are advanced in the first book of the "Essay on the Human Understanding."

Before Locke proceeded to the analysis of *ideas*, properly so called, there was a prior question which seemed to claim some consideration; namely, whether those first principles, or axioms, which are universally granted, which are regarded as undemonstrable, and from which all reasoning originally proceeds, are not to be considered as strictly *innate*. Should these first truths really turn out to be so, it is clear that they would seriously militate against Locke's whole theory; and therefore it was necessary to clear them out of the way, before he proceeded to prove generally the empirical origin of our *ideas*. And what course does he take to accomplish this purpose? He adduces a number of these first truths *in their abstract axiomatic form*, and then undertakes to prove with considerable success, that they are neither universally held nor even universally comprehended.\* Since, however, he had not only to disprove their universality as elements of human knowledge, but was bound also to account for their origin on some positive principles, here arose a formidable difficulty, which he was obliged to encounter. To make absolute and self-evident propositions, such *e. g.* as that a whole is greater than a part, or that it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be, merely experimental and factitious in their nature, appeared absurd; at any rate, to show the method by which they could come simply through the aid of experience, without being involved in the natural constitution of the intellect, was in the highest degree difficult; the only resource left was to take shelter behind a species of nominalism, and to declare the most obvious of such propositions to be *verbal*

\* See Essay, chap. ii. throughout.

abstractions, which might be employed for convenience, but which could be of no utility in aiding the discovery of any truth. "These general maxims," he says, "are of great use in disputes, to stop the mouths of wranglers, but not of much use to the discovery of unknown truths, or to help the mind forward in its search after knowledge." And again—"As to other less general maxims, they are no more than bare verbal propositions, and teach us nothing but the respect and import of names one to another."\*

Now, in this theory of maxims, or first principles, whether speculative or practical, there is a manifest misapprehension of their real force and character, which we may show both from the arguments by which he attempts to prove their non-universality, and also from the considerations, by which he endeavors to prove their practical inutility. In taking up the first or negative argument, Locke selects, as we have seen, some examples, and lays them before us in a definite verbal form; then having shown that such axioms would be unintelligible to a child or a savage, he infers that they are not innate, nay, that their very terms themselves have to be empirically acquired before they can be duly appreciated.† No doubt this is perfectly correct on the supposition, that a first truth necessarily means *something expressed or conceived in formal, logical language*. In this sense there can be no maxim innate, because in *nature* there are given neither propositions ready formed, nor even words by which we may form them. But while no principle is implanted in us by nature, in its complete logical form, yet there may be many *virtually* implied and included in the necessary laws by which our judgments are governed, and our thoughts develop themselves. Ask a savage whether every effect must have a sufficient cause, and he would smile unintelligently at the question; and yet that untutored mind is so constructed, that it acts necessarily upon the very principle, which, clothed in an artificial and verbal dress, it was unable to comprehend. Ask a child whether a whole is greater than a part, or whether the same thing can at the same time be and not be, and, as Locke truly says, he would not very likely comprehend the very terms of the question; but let him be brought into a position in which he has to pass such a judgment *in its concrete form*, and you find that his mind comprehends the full force of the axiom, and acts upon it as necessarily as we do. Certain, then, as it may be, that these first truths are

\* See Essay, Book IV. chap. vii. sec. 11.

† Ibid. chap. ii. sec. 5. See also chap. iii. sec. 19.



unintelligible to the infant or untutored mind, yet, strip them of their abstract dress, and you will find that every mind contains, in its primitive judgments, nay, possesses, as the very law of its activity, the germ of these very axioms which the more cultivated intellect learns but to develop and to express.\*

Again, with regard to the other ground which Locke takes up, when he denies the real value of axioms, and affirms them to be of no avail in our search after knowledge; here, also, there is the same misapprehension of their real nature. That we are unable to draw truth *directly* from such first principles we allow; but that is far from proving them to be worthless. So far, indeed, from that, it may be easily seen, that they lie at the very foundation of all our reasoning, so that without their existence *in the mind* no argument would be possible. Locke affirms, in opposition to this, that mathematicians, who make the most use of axioms, employ them more for convenience or custom than utility; and we are quite ready to grant that they do so, as far as the *verbal expression* of them goes. But let any one try to reason one single step without having them in the mind, and taking their truth for granted, and it will soon be seen that they are the necessary condition of every demonstration that we employ. *Nature gives us nothing in the abstract*, and therefore, in this sense, neither axioms nor ideas can be innate; but she gives us that mental constitution, and impresses upon us those laws of thought, which necessarily involve such first axiomatic truths, and which lead every mind to form them inwardly for itself as soon as it comes into contact with the world without.† Our conclusion, then, respecting the whole question of first principles, speculative and practical, is this, that although in their abstract form they are not innate, yet that there are *innate faculties*, or laws of thought which, when put into action by experience, necessarily give rise to them as primitive judgments; and that these judgments, at first applied in the concrete, at length, by a process of abstraction, assume a perfect axiomatic form. Experience, accordingly, is the *occasion* of their production, but their *real cause* or origin is to be found in the native energy of the human mind.

The doctrine of principles being disposed of in the first book of his Essay, Locke proceeds, in the second, to develop his theory

\* See Leibnitz's "Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain," Book I., where the arguments of Locke upon the question of moral and speculative principles are vigorously refuted.

† See Cousin's "Histoire de la Phil." Leçon 24.



respecting the origin of *our ideas*. The supposition of our ideas being innate, he rejects primarily on this ground, that if it can be shown (which he believes to be quite possible) that we have faculties capable of forming them, there is no reason to regard them as originally implanted.\* So far Locke is undoubtedly correct, and has shown satisfactorily that our natural faculties are sufficient to account for every notion we possess, without our having recourse to the fiction of innate ideas. But then mark the process of reasoning, which he institutes from this point. Let it be allowed, that every idea is the result of our natural faculties; from what, then, he asks, does the action of these faculties take its rise? Manifestly from experience. Therefore, he concludes, experience must be the primary source of all our ideas. This it was which induced Locke to make use of the illustration, that compares the mind to white paper, which is void of all characters until the hand of experience inscribe them.

Now here, again, we may observe the error into which Locke was led by confounding the *cause* of our ideas with their *occasion*. There can be no idea, he argues, prior to experience;—granted. *Therefore*, he concludes, the mind previous to it is, as it were, a "*tabula rasa*," owing every notion, which it gains, primarily to an empirical source. Granted still—if all that is meant be simply, that experience is the *occasion* or *condition* of acquiring our ideas; but if it be intended that this is in every case their proper origin, we at once demur. The mind comes into existence, if indeed void of actual ideas, yet by no means destitute of the forms or categories, both of sensation and intellection, that is, in other words, of intellectual laws and principles; and it is to these that we attribute the direct *origin* of all the pure conceptions of reason, although it might have been experience, which *occasioned* the formation of them.† The spirit of man, just like the seed, to which I before referred, has its inherent energy within itself. The grain of wheat has in it, *potentially*, the ear that is to wave in the next summer's sun, and the acorn, in its little circumference, incloses the oak that is to bear the blast of ages; in the same manner, does the mind at birth contain potentially all the elements of the future man, neither more nor less. But as the seed must come in contact with the soil to call its hidden powers into development, so must the mind come

\* See Essay, chap. ii. sec. 1.

† See Kant's "*Critic of Pure Reason*, Transcendental, Æsthetic, Analytic," in which the *a priori* element is throughout separated from the Empirical, and all experience shown to arise from the synthesis of the two.

into contact with the world of experience, in order that its energies may unfold themselves, and produce their own proper fruits.\*

Having broadly laid down the principle, that all the materials of our knowledge come from experience, Locke goes on to explain his theory more particularly. Observation, he shows, may be external or internal, that is, it may have reference to the visible world, or to our own mental operations. The former kind of observation is called *sensation*, the latter *reflection*. These two, then, sensation and reflection, are the sources of all our ideas, and it was for the sake of proving and illustrating this position that the greater portion (that is, the second book) of the *Essay* was written. Now, in estimating this theory of the origin of our ideas, it is of great importance to know exactly what is included in the two terms sensation and reflection, and to attribute to them neither more nor less than the author intended. With regard to the first, we can have but little difficulty in perceiving, that he included under it simply that state of passive receptivity in which the mind exists, when brought, by means of the senses, into contact with the material world. In making reflection a source of ideas co-ordinate with sensation, he renders quite obvious the distinction between the *passive* and the *active* faculties of man, and clearly avoids the extreme into which so many of his followers have run, in regarding sensation as the foundation principle of all our mental operations. If, then, there be any doubt at all in determining the precise meaning of the theory now before us, it must all rest in the acceptance of the term *reflection*.† The question to be decided is this,—Does Locke intend that by means of reflection we can gain any actual materials of knowledge distinct from the intimations of our senses, or that the use of it is simply to *combine* and *compare* the materials which the senses primarily afford us? If he mean the former, then he admits that there are *two* distinct and *original* sources of knowledge; if the latter, then he allows but *one* real inlet for our

\* Sensationalists have attempted to contravene this view, by the supposition that the understanding grows up into the possession of its powers, just as the human body consolidates. They forget that as, without the process of assimilation, the consolidation of the body could never take place, so without the native construction of the intellectual faculty its powers could never develop. That native construction involves all we contend for—it contains the subjective elements of experience, *i. e.* it contains all those ground-forms of the understanding, by which knowledge from experience can be assimilated, and made valid to the human mind.

† It must be admitted that Locke uses the term reflection in a very wavering and undefined sense. See Stewart's remarks on it in his Preliminary Dissertation—also Hallam's "*Lit. of Europe*," vol. iii. p. 365. I still think, however, that the general and predominating use of the word in Locke's *Essay* may be ascertained with some accuracy.

ideas, although reflection may give us the means of extensively modifying and combining them. A careful perusal of the first few chapters of the second book, is, I think, quite sufficient to convince us, that the latter of these opinions was the one which Locke decidedly entertained.

That sensation is the *first* developed of these two sources, he again and again asserts in such passages as the following:—"I see no reason to believe that the soul thinks before the senses have furnished it with ideas;" and again more clearly, "The mind first employs itself about the impressions made on the senses:" and in many other passages assertions of a similar nature are made.\* To determine, however, more accurately the exact province of reflection, (*i. e.*, of the mind's observation of its own operations,) in the acquisition of our ideas, Locke gives us an analysis of what these inward operations really are. The first is *perception*, which he uses to express merely the consciousness of our sensations.† As, therefore, perception is expressly said to be *passive*, and is only occupied with our sensations, it cannot add any fresh material to our knowledge. The next chapter treats of *retention*, which is the same as memory, and which we see at once, can only occupy itself with ideas already in the mind.‡ The third operation is *discernment*, which expresses simply the separation of our ideas.§ The fourth is *comparison*; the fifth *composition*; and the sixth and last, *abstraction*; all which do nothing more than either combine several ideas together, or isolate some general property belonging to them, and contemplate it by itself.|| These are the mental operations, to discern which is the province of reflection; and it is clear from the whole account, that the different faculties, thus enumerated, are made to hold a place quite subordinate to sensation; that they operate only upon the material afforded by it; and that, in fine, there is only one *real* inlet to our ideas, that, namely, which is the inlet to all the impressions of the material world.

To propound a theory is always an easy task; to sustain it is altogether a different thing. Locke's main difficulty was now to come, that is, to show how every idea, of whatever nature, could enter the mind through the two media which he had pointed out. For this purpose he selects those ideas which appear *least* dependent upon sensation, and had usually been considered as innate; and enters into many long and acute processes of reasoning, in order

\* See Essay, Book II. chap. ii. *passim*.

† Ibid. chap. x.

‡ Ibid. chap. xi. sec. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

§ Ibid. chap. ix. sec. 1, 2, 3, 4.

|| See Essay, Book II. chap. xi. sec. 1, 2.



to bring them within the limits of experience. These ideas, to take them as near as possible in the order in which he has discussed them, are those of Space, of Time, of Infinity, of Causality, of personal Identity, of Substance, and lastly of Good and Evil. To enter into the discussion of these ideas separately, would lead us far beyond our present prescribed limits, and we must, therefore, endeavor to point out, as clearly as we are able, the *fundamental error* which runs through the whole. This is, in fact, no other than that which we have before pointed out, namely, the confounding of the cause with the occasion. Victor Cousin, following the language of the schools, terms the true origin of an idea the *logical* condition of its existence, while the occasion of it he calls the *chronological* condition. In seeking, for example, the logical order of any two ideas, we attempt to determine which one *rationaly* includes the other. In seeking the chronological order, we attempt to determine which one the mind actually *becomes first conscious of*. If, according to the former method, we seek to deduce our notions in a logical series one from another, we shall find that the abstract ideas, which I have mentioned above, are all of them primary—that they are the *first* links in the several chains of subordinate ideas, which are referable to them as their categories; but if, according to the latter method, we simply ask, what is the order *in time* according to which these notions actually arose within us, then we shall find that the date of our first experience is the date also of our first conceptions.\* Let us take, as an example, the idea of *space*, and the idea of *matter*. Which one, we ask, is dependent upon the other? *Logically*, the notion of body must evidently depend upon that of space; for you can conceive of the existence of no single body, and no aggregate of bodies, without placing them in space, while you can easily conceive of space denuded of all matter. On the other hand, in the *chronological* order, the idea of Body would stand, at least, contemporary with that of Space, since it is our first contact with body which occasions our reason to form for itself the absolute notion of space, as that in which all matter must exist. The want of this distinction, or rather the frequent neglect of the logical dependence of our ideas, one upon the other, is the fundamental error pervading the whole attempt, which Locke makes, to give to our pure and absolute conceptions an empirical origin.

To maintain his theory satisfactorily, Locke is betrayed into statements which, however acute, will not stand the test of a closer

\* Histoire de la Philosophie, Leçon 17.



analysis. The idea of Space he derives immediately from *Sight* and *Touch*, the correctness of which he thinks so evident, "that it would be as needless to go to prove that men perceive by their sight a distance between bodies of different colors, or between parts of the same body, as that they see colors themselves."\* Now, what does Locke mean by saying that we derive this idea from Sight and Touch? Not assuredly that we can see or touch Space itself, not that it is an actual *sensation*,—but that, when we see *Bodies* apart, there is immediately suggested to us the idea of the intervening distance; and so also that, when we have *felt* resistance, the negative of non-resistance brings us to the same notion. The idea of Space, then, on Locke's theory, though distinct from that of Body, yet is derived by *inference* from it. In reply to this, however, we ask, does not the idea of Body logically include and suppose that of Space? Can we conceive of Body without Space? Can we see it or touch it without seeing it and touching it *in space*? To us it seems clear, as Kant has abundantly shown, that the idea of Space is one of the very forms of all sensation, though not, as he supposes, simply of a subjective value; and if so, it must *virtually* exist before any induction from sensible experience can possibly be made.

Of a similar nature is his account of the notion of *Time*. This he would show arises from reflection upon the succession of our thoughts. It is an induction from our *inward* experience. But is not the notion of Time itself an element necessary to this inward experience? All our ideas—all the inward events of our life—must exist *in Time*; it is the subjective sphere of the mind's operations. How, then, can it result as an experimental deduction from those operations?

The idea of Infinity, again, Locke makes purely negative; a conclusion which he drew, as it seems to me, from regarding the word *idea* as implying a distinct image in the mind. That we cannot have an image of Infinity in the mind is true, but that is no proof that we may not rise to a *conception* of it.\*

As to personal Identity, it consists, according to Locke, entirely in our consciousness; so that, if our consciousness ceases, we of course must cease to be the same persons that we were before.

\* Essay, Book II. chap. xiii. sec. 2.

\* Mr. Hallam has some excellent remarks upon Locke's use of the term *Idea*. "We cannot have an Image in the mind of a thousand-sided figure—but we have the most precise conception of it." Again he says, "What Image can we form of a differential, which can pretend to represent it in any other sense than as  $dx$  represents it, by suggestion not by resemblance?"—*Lit. of Europe*, vol. iii. p. 367.

According to his own doctrine, therefore, that consciousness ceases during sleep, it follows that our personal Identity is nightly suspended. But here, as before, we may ask, could we have ever had any consciousness at all—that is, could the mind have ever been conscious of its own operations *as its own*, without the idea of personal Identity being virtually at the basis? The one process logically involves the other.

Of Power, or Causation, Locke's account is somewhat varying. In one passage he derives it from the observation, that we can move our bodies at pleasure; or that one object in nature can produce motion in another.\* In another place he derives it from reflection upon our own faculties, independently of Body.† The whole chapter on power, indeed, seems to me to be written in a much higher strain of philosophizing than the preceding portions of the Essay.

The distinct idea of Substance, Locke repeatedly denies, except it be a cluster of sensations with the *supposition* of some substratum in which they adhere—a supposition which he compares to the Indian fable of the tortoise that supports the world. If an idea is to mean an image, or actual resemblance in the mind, he is undoubtedly right; but that we have the *à priori conception* of Substance as a synthetical judgment, we shall have in the sequel many proofs.

Lastly—Locke's ideas of Good and Evil are entirely of the utilitarian character; they are made the result instead of being held up as the foundation of our ideas of reward and punishment.‡

In all these instances Locke has admirably traced the *conditions* under which the reason is excited to action, and the occasions upon which its own primitive judgments are formed, in accordance with the laws of our intellectual being; but he has erred in representing the absolute idea, as being derivable in each case from those allied sensations, by which the understanding is indeed aroused, but not conditioned to the perception of fundamental truth.

With regard to the true origin of these ideas, we should come to the same conclusion as we did in the case of first principles; namely, that they cannot be strictly speaking *innate*, inasmuch as nothing is given by nature in its abstract form. The original opera-

\* Book II. chap. vii. sec. 8.

† Book II. chap. xxi. sec. 1.

‡ Book I. chap. iii. *passim*. Locke's utilitarianism was the chief ground of the attack he sustained from Lord Shaftesbury, and other ethical writers of the same age.

tions of the human reason are its *primitive judgments*. These judgments, at first particular or concrete, are generalized, by the aid of language, into propositions or axioms; and these propositions still further separate themselves into *ideas*. What is properly innate within us is the faculty, by which we are led to form these primitive judgments, so soon as we actually come into contact with the outer world. Our *absolute ideas*, therefore, which are virtually included in them, although not of themselves innate, yet arise by necessity from this *innate power of understanding and reason*, and are by no means, as Locke would have it, conceptions drawn originally from the intimations of sense. By taking up this position he was obliged, as we have seen, to attenuate or altogether destroy some of the most necessary and undeniable conceptions of the human mind; but he upheld the credit of the theory with which he started, and which, we have no doubt with the most thorough conviction of its truth, he labored most earnestly to support. Such was the consequence of reducing his data to his principles, instead of deducing his principles from his data.\*

The third book of Locke's Essay is a treatise on the philosophy of Language. We shall not occupy space by making any remarks upon this. With the exception of some leaning to that species of nominalism, which was afterwards more completely developed by Horne Tooke, there is much practical wisdom contained in the cautions which are given, against being led astray by the force of words, or being deluded, as Bacon terms it, by the *Idola Fori*.

Before we close, however, our critique upon this immortal Essay, we must offer a few considerations upon the fourth book. Hitherto Locke had been occupied simply and solely with *ideas* and their origin; he had kept himself strictly within the limits of *psychology*, and sought to determine nothing, except what properly belonged to the inner world. In the fourth book he makes the passage from psychology into *ontology*, and institutes inquiries like the following: What is the nature of ideas? What do they represent? What is the knowledge of objective existence we obtain from them? And what confidence may we have in the correctness and reality of this knowledge?—questions which all must admit to be of no small importance. So long as we regard our ideas simply *as ideas*, it is evident that we are completely shut up within ourselves: how, then, are we to take the step from the subjective world to the

\* On the true theory of Ideas, see Cousin's "Histoire de la Philosophie," Leçon 22, towards the close.



objective; and how are we to know that the one is a veracious manifestation of the other? This leads us naturally to ask, what is Locke's real theory respecting the nature of ideas—a point, the determination of which has occasioned no little dispute amongst philosophers. Dr. Reid contends, that Locke's "*idea*" is a real independent existence in the original and proper use of the term, and claims the honor of having exploded this long-sustained theory, on the principles of common sense. Dr. Brown withheld from him the honor thus laid claim to, and denied that Locke, in common with many others of the same and a former age, used the term in the sense thus attributed to them.\* Perhaps the true statement of the case lies midway between these two extremes. Dr. Reid attributes to Locke too much of the peripatetic doctrine, while Dr. Brown as certainly attributes to him just so much too little. That Locke believed all the apparatus of sensible species, intelligible species, and phantasms, as given by Aristotle, we think very improbable; at the same time he manifestly held a representative theory respecting the doctrine of perception; supposing, not with Dr. Reid, that our knowledge of external things is *immediate*, but that, besides the perceiving mind, and the thing perceived, there is the representation, or *idea* of the latter, as the connecting link between them. This may be seen by consulting the fourth chapter of the fourth book of his Essay, in which he says,—“It is evident that the mind knows not things immediately, but by the intervention of the ideas it has of them: our knowledge, therefore, is real only so far as there is a conformity between our ideas and the reality of things.” Here, then, we have plainly his fixed sentiment, that knowledge depends upon the conformity of our ideas with the external things they represent, and that error consists in their non-conformity. In this theory, we conceive, Locke has taken up an untenable position; and we willingly concede, therefore, to Dr. Reid, the honor of having put the whole subject in a clear light, and fixed it, as far as he went, on its right foundation.†

Viewing the representative theory of human knowledge as we will, it is beset with difficulties. First, on the supposition that the image or idea which intervenes between the mind and the outer world is material, we find it impossible to account for those notions, which do not admit of being represented by a material sym-

\* Compare Reid's "Inquiry into the Human Mind," chapters i. and vii., with Brown's "Lectures," Lecture xxvii.

† On this perceptionalist controversy, consult Sir W. Hamilton's admirable article—*Edinburgh Review*, No. 52.



bol. Of this kind are our notions of secondary qualities, for who can conceive of the material image of blue or green, or soft or hard? \* Of the same nature also are all those notions we have of the spiritual world, for is it to be conceived that mind, immaterial in itself, throws off a material image in order that it may be the object of its own contemplation? In fact, Locke gives up philosophy altogether as soon as he comes to consider the real existence of anything beyond the material, and throws himself upon revelation as the only source from which we can infer its certainty. † Again, if we suppose the *idea* to be immaterial, we are no better off: for here the chief objection against the whole representative hypothesis has its full force. Allow, for argument's sake, that our knowledge does all depend upon the conformity of the idea with its object; how, then, are we to infer this conformity? Without being able to institute some comparison between the image and the original, it is clear we can never know whether they resemble each other or not; but to institute this comparison supposes a *direct* perception of that original, independent of its representative idea, and shuts us up to this alternative—either that we have the means of knowing objects without the intervention of ideas, and therefore that they are unnecessary; or else, if we have no means of knowing them otherwise, that we can never be sure of the conformity between the object and the idea, on which very conformity our knowledge depends; and therefore, can have no secure ground for certain knowledge at all. The refutation of the “ideal system” lies, in fact, almost in a nutshell. The intervening image must be material or immaterial. If it be material, it still remains to show how the mind can communicate with it without a second image; if it be immaterial, then how can it communicate with the outward world any better than the mind itself? The only conclusion to which the whole theory can ultimately lead, is that of the most rigid scepticism. ‡

That scepticism is the real result of the theory we have now described, is seen from the use that has been actually made of it. Berkeley drew from it his arguments against the existence of the material world, and Hume based upon the same the principles, by which he sought to involve the whole superstructure of human

\* Locke virtually abandons his own theory here, and admits that we can have no representation of secondary qualities whatever. Essay, Book II. chap. viii. sec. 13.

† See Essay, Book IV. chap. xi. sec. 12.

‡ For a more full discussion of the theory of representationalism, consult Cousin's “Histoire de la Philosophie,” Leçon xxii.

knowledge, from its very foundations, in one scene of doubt and confusion.

Our perceptions, as Dr. Reid has shown in opposition to this theory, instead of depending upon an intermediate representative idea, are *direct* and *immediate*: the mind perceives and knows just because it has been so constituted, and possesses *within itself* those first principles, (whether we call them with Kant forms of the understanding, or with Reid principles of common sense, or with Brown principles of intuitive belief,) which are the starting-points whence all our subsequent and deduced knowledge takes its rise.\* The more accurate analysis, however, of this theory of perception we must leave until we come to the explanation of the philosophy of "common sense."

Into Locke's views respecting judgment, faith, enthusiasm, and some other points of a minor character, we shall not enter, because they bear but slightly upon the main features of his philosophy. We cannot part from him, however, without bearing testimony to his singular independence of mind, his acuteness and strength of intellect, his rectitude of character, his honest and unflinching search after truth, and his zeal for the diffusion of a manly, intelligent piety. If, however, we would point out candidly the influence which Locke exerted upon the progress of speculative philosophy, it must be confessed, that notwithstanding all the admirable lessons which his writings contain, they manifested a decided leaning towards sensationalism, and included, though unknown to himself, germs which, after a time, bore the fruits of utilitarianism in morals, of materialism in metaphysics, and of scepticism in religion. To exhibit the process by which this was effected, will be the next point to which our attention must be directed.

### SECT. III.—*Effects of Locke in England.*

The "Essay on the Human Understanding" enjoyed, from its very first publication, a reputation almost unparalleled in the whole history of philosophy. The principles there advocated with so much acuteness, and so earnest a love of truth, became almost universally diffused; but unfortunately they fell into the hands of men who, being entirely wanting in the simplicity of

\* Reid's "Inquiry into the Human Mind," chap. ii. sec. 6, 7, 8, 9.

mind, and the sincere piety which had distinguished their author, appropriated them to purposes altogether foreign to his intentions.

The deistical school of writers, which at this time arose, armed themselves with many of Locke's conclusions in order to enforce their own sceptical opinions. Collins aimed chiefly at establishing upon a firm basis the doctrine of necessity; Dodwell struck out boldly into the path of materialism; while Mandeville, assuming with Locke, that there are no innate practical principles in the human mind, dealt a mischievous blow at the root of all moral distinctions. From hence originated some of the most acute controversies which the history of mental and moral science presents,—controversies which summoned the ability of Stillingfleet, the wit and elegance of Shaftesbury, the acuteness of Norris, and the gigantic strength of Clarke, in opposition to the immoral and irreligious tendencies, which seemed likely to flow from the empirical principles, that were now apparently taking so firm a hold upon the philosophic spirit of the age. These, however, we must pass over, as their names are better known in the departments of ethics and theology than in that of metaphysics: we have only mentioned them in order to show the more immediate effects of Locke's philosophy upon the literary society of the day, and to indicate the fact, that his principles were neither established nor developed without the earnest protest and the powerful opposition of some of the first thinkers and reasoners of that period.

The next really philosophical writer, whom we find carrying out the sensational tendency to its fuller development, is David Hartley. The philosophy of Hartley is especially worthy of attention, from the fact of its being the first decided attempt we know of, at combining the study of psychology with the results of modern physiological investigations. Hartley was educated at Cambridge for the medical profession, and was led, both by the nature of his studies, and by the influence of the metaphysical school represented in that university by Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Law, to adopt some of the more extreme principles of sensationalism. His first attempt was to propound a theory of sensation, grounded upon an anatomical inspection of the nervous system. Locke, though himself of the medical profession, had never ventured to speculate upon the method by which sensations are communicated to the mind; regarding the subject as purely hypothetical, he probably never formed an opinion upon it, but left it untouched, as belonging to that mysterious and unknown process, which connects together

our bodily affections and mental feelings. Hartley, on the contrary, desirous of supplying what he considered a deficiency in the philosophy of Locke, proposed to account for the phenomena of sensation by certain *vibrations*, which he supposed to take place in the nervous system.\* The vibratory hypothesis of Hartley is too well known by all the readers of modern philosophy to require here to be explained at any length, and besides, is now gone so much into disrepute as hardly to require any refutation; we shall content ourselves, therefore, with making two remarks upon it. The first is, that *as an hypothesis* there is a great improbability of its being true, owing to the extreme unfitness of the soft and pulpy material of which the nerves are composed, to produce or propagate vibrations. The second remark is, that even if all these physical changes and vibratory movements were *proved* to exist, yet still there would be as great a chasm as ever between the material condition of our sensation and the ultimate mental effect. To say that the feeling itself consists in these nervous movements is absurd. "There may be," says a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, (Oct. 1806), "little shakings in the brain for anything we know, and there may even be shakings of a different kind accompanying every act of thought or perception; but that the shakings themselves are the thoughts or perception, we are so far from admitting, that we find it impossible to comprehend what can be meant by the assertion. The shakings are certain throbbings, vibrations, or stirrings, in a whitish half-fluid substance like custard, which we might see perhaps or feel if we had eyes and fingers sufficiently small or fine for their office. But what should we see or feel, upon the supposition that we could detect by our senses everything that actually took place in the brain? We should see the particles of the substance change their place a little, move a little up or down, to the right or to the left, round about, or zig-zag, or in some other course or direction. This is all that we could see if Dr. Hartley's conjecture were proved by actual observation, because this is all that exists in motion according to our conception of it, and all that we mean when we say that there is motion in any substance. Is it intelligible, then, to say that this motion, the whole of which we see and comprehend, is thought and feeling, and that thought and feeling will exist wherever we can excite a similar motion in a similar substance? In our humble apprehension the proposition is not so much false as utterly

\* *Observations on Man*, chap. i. sec. 1.



unmeaning and incomprehensible." Admitting, then, the truth of Hartley's *vibratiuncles*, we get no nearer than ever to the explanation of the *mental* phenomena of sensation.

Had our author confined his philosophical speculations to this theory, his name would probably never have come down to our own day in the annals of philosophy: the other doctrines, however, which he grounded upon it, more especially that of association, have given him a lasting reputation amongst the most ingenious writers of the last century. The law of the association of Ideas was first clearly hinted at by Hobbes, who in his "*Leviathan*" speaks of it in several places, under the phrases "trains of thought," or "trains of imagination."\* The *term* association was first used by Locke, in his immortal Essay,† to express certain connections which exist between one thought and another in the flow of our consciousness. Tucker, in his "*Light of Nature Pursued*," used the word *combination* as better suited to express the phenomena of the case:‡ but Hartley preferred to retain the original word association, although at the same time he made a complete revolution in the meaning which was to be attached to it. In order to appreciate this change of meaning, we should observe that Locke had applied the term "association of ideas" only to those more striking and remarkable combinations, which appear to be rather out of the ordinary course of thought, than to the *law* by which the whole flow of our consciousness is regulated. Hartley, on the other hand, used it to express *any combination of thought or feeling whatever, which is capable of becoming habitual by means of repetition*.

His theory, then, as nearly as we can convey it in few words, is as follows: The objects of the external world affect, in some manner, the extreme ends of the nerves, which spread from the brain as centre to every part of the body. This affection produces a vibration, which is continued along the nerve by the agency of an elastic ether, until it reaches the brain, where it constitutes the phenomenon we term sensation. When a sensation has been experienced several times, the vibratory movement from which it arises acquires the tendency to repeat itself spontaneously, even when the external object is not present. These repetitions or *relics* of sensation are *ideas*, which in their turn possess the property of recalling each other by virtue of mutual association among them-

\* *Leviathan*, chap. iii.

† Essay, Book II. chap. xxxiii.

‡ *Light of Nature*, chap. ix.

selves.\* According to this doctrine, for example, the sight of an apple will recall the sensation formerly produced by the taste, thus giving rise to the *idea* of its taste; and the idea of the taste again will give rise to any other ideas which have been before experienced at the same time. Thus the things to which association applies, Hartley considers to be these three—sensations, ideas, and muscular movements (emotions being completely confounded with sensations, and therefore not being mentioned separately). These classes of phenomena having been previously experienced together, may recall each other at any time or in any order—a fact which our author briefly expresses by the following law. “If any sensation A, idea B, or muscular motion C, be associated a sufficient number of times with any other sensation D, idea E, or muscular motion F, it will at last excite the simple idea belonging to the sensation D, the very idea E, or the very muscular motion F.” So much then concerning association generally.†

Passing over Hartley’s classification of the laws of association, I shall only stop to notice *one* principle, which he makes of supreme importance, and that is the law of transference. The nature of this law is as follows. An idea is sometimes associated with another through the medium of a third; but in process of time this intermediate idea may be disregarded, and yet the connection between the first and third may notwithstanding remain. Thus the idea of pleasure, which is so indissolubly connected with *money*, arises from the conveniences which it is able to procure, while in the mind of the miser the conveniences are lost sight of, and the very possession of the money itself is regarded as containing the whole enjoyment. In this way Hartley accounts for almost all the emotions and passions of the human mind. The domestic affections, for instance, arise from the transference of the pleasure derived from parental kindness to the parent itself; the social and patriotic affections from transferring the pleasures of society to the country which affords them; in like manner also the moral and religious affections, the love of virtue and the love of God, arise from the pleasures connected with virtuous and pious conduct, being transferred to the law of action, or to the supreme Lawgiver from whom these pleasures have emanated. In this way Hartley expands his principle of association, until it affords him an expla-

\* Observations on Man, chap. i. sec. 2.

† For the full description of the generation of ideas by association, see chap. i sec. 2 and 3.

nation, more or less clearly, of all the multifarious phenomena of man's consciousness.\*

The subordinate effects of these principles are easy to be imagined. If all our ideas are but relics of sensations, and all excited spontaneously by the laws of association, it is abundantly evident that the power of the will must be a nonentity, that man can really have no control over his own mind, that he is the creature of irresistible necessity. Hartley was accordingly a firm necessarian.† Another natural effect of the theory of vibrations is materialism. I am aware that Hartley is not chargeable with maintaining this doctrine; his sincere religious character, coupled with great acuteness in philosophical thinking, held him back from admitting a system which can seldom be united with deep religious feelings, *never* with eminent metaphysical abilities. But that this philosophy naturally led to materialistic views in others, whose minds were not under the same restraints as his own, was abundantly proved by the school to which he gave origin. A third effect of the Hartleian metaphysics was a bold defence of nominalism, which, though a matter of minor consequence in comparison with those above-mentioned, yet sufficiently indicated the tendency of the whole system.‡

That there is great value to be attached to much which Hartley has drawn from the law of association, and that he has afforded an explanation of many phenomena, before very imperfectly understood, cannot be denied. The very ardor, however, with which he threw himself into his system, and the very closeness with which he analyzed the facts of the case, necessarily imparted a one-sidedness to his philosophy, and led to the neglect of some other facts equally important. The ground-principles of our intellectual life—the fundamental conceptions, without which even sensations could not be formed into any definite ideas whatever, all these were overlooked; the powers of the will, as exhibited in the working of the intellectual emotions, were summarily reduced to the category of sensation; and thus perception, judgment, memory, all our abstract ideas, and all our moral feelings, were alike consolidated together as the natural effect of the great law of association, and all shown to emanate from the vibrations of the nervous system! From these considerations it becomes evident how important a link the writings of Hartley formed in the chain of those causes

\* See *Observations on Man*, chap. iv. sec. 4, 5, 6.

† See his chap. on "The Mechanism of the Human Mind."

‡ *Observations*, chap. iii. sec. i.

by which the philosophy of sensation was aided on its road to complete empiricism. The result of those writings, indeed, soon showed that having conducted his speculations to the very verge of materialism, it was not in his power to prevent *those*, whom he had carried along with him in his reasoning, from overstepping the boundary.\*

The principles of Hartley found, shortly after his death, an able and zealous expositor in Dr. Priestley. The name of Priestley holds a position in the scientific history of our country, which his greatest opponents might envy, and with which his most ardent admirers may be content. It is not now, however, for the first time remarked, that the minds best fitted for prosecuting the labors of experimental philosophy, are by no means those from which we expect light to be cast into the more obscure region of metaphysical analysis. Priestley's mind was objective to an extreme; he could fix his faith upon nothing, which had not the evidence of sense in some way or other impressed upon it. Science, morals, politics, philosophy, religion, all came to him under the type of the sensational. The most spiritual ideas were obliged to be cast into a material mould before they could commend themselves to his judgment or conscience. His intellect was rapid to an extraordinary degree; he saw the bearings of a question according to his own principles at a glance, and embodied his thoughts in volumes, whilst many other men would hardly have sketched out their plan. All this, though admirable in the man of *action*, was not the temperament to form the solid metaphysician, nay, it was precisely opposed to that deep reflective habit, that sinking into one's own inmost consciousness, from which alone speculative philosophy can obtain light and advancement. With such tendencies of mind, therefore, and living in an age, the whole bearing of which was away from the ideal to the sensational, it is not surprising that Priestley entered with energy into those principles of Hartley, from which he hoped to reduce all mental science to a branch of physical investigation.

The metaphysical position he assumed, may be fully seen in his "Examination of Reid, Beattie, and Oswald;" in fact, it is summed up in one extraordinary sentence, where he affirms, that "something has been done in the field of knowledge by Descartes, very much

\* The relation which Hartley bears to Hobbes, has been given by Mr. Hallam, in an eloquent passage, "Lit. of Europe," vol. ii. p. 491.

Many notices of the philosophy of Hartley occur in various parts of the writings of Stewart, Brown, Young, and Mackintosh. By all these writers his errors have been exposed in different points of view, and his real merits awarded.



by Mr. Locke, but most of all by Dr. Hartley, who has thrown more useful light upon the theory of mind, than Newton did upon the theory of the natural world!" After this acknowledgment of admiration towards the writings of Hartley, of course we could hardly expect to find anything else in the metaphysical works of Priestley, than a second edition of the Hartleian philosophy, revised, corrected, and expanded into a more mature form. Such, in fact, was precisely the case. The doctrine of philosophical necessity was more fully argued and more systematically enforced; utilitarian morals were maintained upon a broader basis, and illustrated by more copious examples; and materialism, from which Hartley himself had shrunk back, was now openly avowed.\*

Priestley rested the truth of materialism upon two deductions. The first was, that thought and sensation are essentially the same thing—that the whole variety of our ideas, however abstract and refined they may become, are, nevertheless, but modifications of the sensational faculty. This doctrine, we shall see, had been more fully maintained in France, by Condillac. The second deduction was, that all sensation, and, consequently, all thought, arises from the affections of our material organization, and, therefore, consists entirely in the motion of the material particles of which the nerves and brain are composed. It is but justice, however, here to add, that Priestley did not push his materialism so far as to evolve any conclusions contrary to the fundamental principles of man's natural religion, or to invalidate the evidences of a future state. In the full conviction of these truths he both lived and died. To sum up, then, the precise influence of Priestley upon the progress of sensationalism in our own country in a few words, we may say, that he succeeded in cutting the last tie which had held Hartley to the poor remains of spiritualism, that he reduced the whole phenomena of mind to organic processes, the mind itself to a material organization, and mental philosophy to a physical science.

It might be expected, perhaps, that we should pause here in our history, to offer some remarks upon the abuses to which the principle of association has been subjected in the Hartleian school of philosophy, and to show how many of the simple phenomena of our intellectual and moral being have been there explained by other phenomena far more obscure and complex than themselves; but as this subject will come more fully under our consideration

\* See his "Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Explained,"—and *Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit*, sec. 3, 4, 5, 6. Also his work entitled "Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind, with Essays relating to the subject of it."

in a future chapter, we must waive the discussion of it for the present, and go on to exhibit the final issue to which this sensational tendency led.

Priestley had denied the separate reality of *mind* or rather *spirit* in man, but had not rejected the existence of it altogether in the universe. To do this, required another reasoner still more bold in urging his arguments to their ultimate conclusions, and less under the restraints of early religious associations. Such a reasoner appeared in the person of Dr. Darwin, who determined to banish *spirit* altogether from the universe, to make the infinite and omnipresent mind itself synonymous with the all-pervading powers of an impersonal nature, and thus to trample the most cherished of man's religious hopes under the feet of a materialistic unbelief. This we may regard as the culminating point of sensationalism. While idealism proceeds onwards in its conclusions, till it has banished matter, nay, everything else but the one eternal mind, in its various developments, out of existence, this opposed system of philosophy does not stop in the other direction, till it has reduced all mind, even the infinite mind itself, to nature and organization.

In conclusion, the influence which sensationalism exerted *generally* upon the age, may be seen in its bearing upon many of the subordinate branches of philosophy. To take the philosophy of language as an instance, we have in Horne Tooke the grammarian of this school. It is needless to remind the reader of the ultra-nominalism which he professed; of the ingenious attempt he made, in his "*Επεα Πτεροεντα*," to derive every word from some material symbol, and of the inference he drew, that our reason itself is the gradual result of language, instead of language being the direct product of our reason.\*

The moralist and politician again, of the same philosophy, appeared in the person of Jeremy Bentham, who stands forth as one of the most uncompromising advocates of the utilitarian system of ethics. Archdeacon Paley, another advocate of utilitarian morals, might also be mentioned as having philosophized under the guidance of Locke and of his most devoted follower, Abraham Tucker, and as having erected his ethical system upon principles derived from these sources. The very names of Bentham and Paley, however, remind us that we are already upon the confines of the eighteenth century, and that we must cease to pursue the results

\* An able reconsideration of some important points of the philosophy of language, will be found in Mr. B. H. Smart's "*Outlines of Sematology*."

of sensationalism in our own country any further, until we come to look more particularly into the *characteristics* of the present age.

#### SECT. IV.—*Effects of Locke in France and Germany.*

Whilst the philosophy of sensationalism was thus developing itself in England, a similar progress was made in France with still greater energy and far more extensive reputation. The "Essay on the Human Understanding" being soon after its appearance translated and extensively read throughout the whole circle of the literati of that country, produced quite as great an impression there, as it did on this side the Channel. That there should arise, therefore, in France, as well as in England, defenders and expounders of Locke's philosophy, was a matter almost of necessity. The first man who undertook this task was *Condillac*, a writer who is universally placed at the head of the whole modern school of the French sensationalism. Condillac, like Hartley in our own country, came forth as a professed disciple and warm admirer of Locke, but in process of time departed equally far, if not still farther, than Hartley himself, from the principles of his master. The course, indeed, which he took, was a very different one from that of the Cambridge philosopher; but whilst he avoided some of the faults into which that philosopher fell, he went perhaps with still hastier steps towards the region of extreme empiricism.

The first effort which Condillac made in the department of philosophy was a treatise on the origin of human knowledge, ("*Essai sur l'Origine des Connaissances Humaines*,") the very title of which is sufficient to indicate his affinity with Locke; indeed the work itself may be regarded as a kind of reproduction with some modifications (not improvements) of the "Essay on the Human Understanding." The chief point in which we here trace the strong tendency of Condillac's mind towards sensationalism is in the explanation he gives of *reflection*, as one of the two sources of our ideas. Locke had made a very clear distinction between the passive and the active faculties; he saw plainly that whilst sensations are produced quite independently of ourselves, there are other powers which are brought into exercise by our own will. In his philosophy, then, sensation is the *passive* source from which we derive ideas, reflection the *active* one; in the former case ideas are, as it were, put into us from without, the mind meanwhile ex-

isting simply in a receptive state; in the latter case the active faculties are *voluntarily* exerted, and from the material afforded by the senses construct a thousand complex ideas for themselves. Condillac, although at first assuming with Locke,\* that these are the two only sources of our knowledge, manages in the course of his treatise so completely to modify and transform the nature of the active faculties, that everything really distinguishing them from sensation entirely disappears. First of all, he identifies perception with consciousness, making sensation (as we also regard it) the bare feeling arising from any external object; while perception (which is generally and correctly regarded as an active intellectual process) is made to be simply the self-consciousness of that feeling. Beginning then with sensation, we have perception used to mean the *consciousness* of sensation, then the other faculties, involved in the term reflection as used in the Lockian sense, are stripped of their active character, until the whole distinction between sensation and reflection is suppressed, the natural activity of the human mind virtually denied, and every inward phenomenon thus brought down to the level of our passive and sensational feelings.† Those absolute and pure conceptions of reason which Locke labored so manfully to prove compatible with his own theory, Condillac explains with the greatest ease. Relative and absolute are to him one and the same thing. "Ideas," he says, "are absolute when we stop at them, and make them the object of our reflection without referring them to others; but when we consider them as subordinate to others, we call them relative;"‡ of such nature is the flimsy yet at the same time elegant analysis by which Condillac disposes of the most grave and subtle metaphysical questions.

The most ingenious part of this work, perhaps, is that in which he treats of the influence of language upon our mental phenomena. In his theory on this question he coincides to a great extent with Horne Tooke, making language the actual source from which many of our faculties are produced. Contemplation, recollection, imagination, judgment, reasoning, all those powers in a word which render the human mind superior to that of the lower animals, he supposes to grow up into distinctive faculties by the use of language.§ In this

\* Essai sur l'Origine, &c., chap. i.

† Ibid. sec. ii chap. i. § xiii. Œuvres, Paris, 1798. "Ainsi la perception et la conscience ne sont qu'une même opération sous deux noms." Compare § xvi., in which a summary of his doctrine is afforded us.

‡ Essai sur l'Origine, &c., sec. iii. § xiv.

§ Ibid. Partie II. sec. i. chaps. ix. and x.



theory, we conceive, he falls anew into what we have seen already to be the perpetual blunder of sensationalism, namely, the substitution of the occasion for the cause. Language, we admit, is the instrument by which most of our *complex* mental operations are perfected, but it is far from being the basis of them; on the contrary, the very fact of our being able to use language at all, is a sufficient proof of the prior existence of certain faculties within us, without which words would prove utterly unintelligible, and the most perfect language appeal to man no more than it does to a brute. It is, however, the constant tendency of sensationalism, from its first commencement to its complete development, to lose sight of the inherent and what we may properly term innate energies of the mind; and then to attribute the phenomena to which they give rise, to the outward *occasion* by which those energies are brought into play. Language is the direct product of the human reason, as created by God; but when it is once formed, then, we allow, it begins directly to *react* upon the mind which gave it birth, and thus to aid it in its still further advancement.

With this brief notice we must pass away from Condillac's first philosophical production to another of a more decided character, and which certainly lays far greater claim to originality,—I mean his treatise on Sensations (*"Traité des Sensations"*). In this work Condillac openly released himself from the authority of Locke, took up boldly the position, which in the former treatise he only seemed to be aiming at, and made good the claim to which he aspired, that of being the great apostle of sensationalism to his age. And here we shall be better able to point out, in what respect our author differs from Hartley, and to compare the systems, to which they have respectively given rise, with each other. Locke admitted as an ultimate and unresolvable fact, the existence of certain intellectual faculties, of which, it will be remembered, he gives us a distinct classification. Hartley, as we have seen, attempted to account for all these faculties on the principle of association of ideas, and propounded a theory of sensation, based upon supposed vibrations in the nervous system, by which the whole phenomena of association might be explained. In doing this he entirely confounded (as we have shown) our emotional states with our sensational, and having done so, considered himself to have succeeded at length in accounting for all the phenomena, whether of sensation, intellection, or emotion, by means of his favorite vibratiuncles. Condillac, although starting with the same desire of simplifying

what Locke had left unresolved, and of finding some *one* principle or other to which all our faculties may be reduced, very soon struck out into a different route. He regarded *sensation* as the one great unresolvable fact to which the chief attention of the philosopher is to be directed,—a fact for which he makes no attempt, like Hartley, to account, respecting which he propounds no theory whatever, but which, he supposes, we may take as the secure starting point for a complete system of psychology.\* After pointing out the deficiency of Locke, in not discovering, or attempting to discover, the principles by which the different intellectual operations, such as thinking, reasoning, knowing, willing, believing, are generated, he proceeds then to develop his own theory on this question, by showing them to be nothing more or less than *transformed sensations*.†

The method by which this is proved is somewhat of the following kind. First, let us assume the mind, as Locke did, to be a “*tabula rasa*.” Next let a simple sensation, as an odor, be experienced. The mind at once becomes occupied with the new feeling, and then commences what we term *attention*. Attention, therefore, is another name for sensation. After a time other sensations are experienced, and the mind becomes occupied with those which *have been*, as well as with those which *are*. When we are occupied with those which have been, and are now past, we term it *memory*; and memory, therefore, is no other than a transformed sensation. From the co-existence of past and present sensations results *comparison*, which is no other than a double attention. The comparison of different sensations, again, gives rise to *judgment*, and judgment to *abstraction*, &c.; so that all our intellectual powers, one after the other, are neither more nor less than transformed sensations.‡ A similar course is adopted with regard to the emotions. Sensations are either agreeable or disagreeable; hence arise desire and aversion. These sensations, however, may refer to the past, the present, or prospectively to the future; from whence spring the different passions of remorse, or hope, or joy, or fear,—in a word, the whole phenomena of our emotional nature.§ Finally, the will itself, with all its mighty energies, is shown to be like the intellect, nothing more than a transformed sensation.||

To illustrate this doctrine, Condillac supposes a perfectly organ-

\* *Traité des Sensations*. See the opening passage.

† *Traité des Sensations*. See *Extrait raisonné*, “*Précis de la première partie*.”

‡ *Ibid.* Partie I. chap. i. ii.

§ *Traité des Sensations*, Partie I. chap. iii.

|| *Ibid.* Partie I. chap. iii. § 9.

ized human being to be created, incased in a marble covering; and then, proceeding to lift this covering, he attempts, with great ingenuity, to show how the different mental phenomena would make their appearance one after the other, as the impressions of the external world were more freely admitted, until *the man* becomes morally and intellectually complete. Now, in all this he has marked very beautifully the various *occasions* upon which his statue would require the impulses derived from the external world, in order to bring its various faculties into operation; but he forgets that these occasions might exist forever, and be eternally prompting to action, but that no intelligence would ever result unless the faculties were at hand, and all ready constituted for reacting upon them. Condillac has, in fact, from the very first step of his analysis, in which he explains attention, substituted the occasion for the cause. No doubt our experiencing a sensation is the occasion on which we first show the phenomenon that is termed attention, but we can by no means conclude from hence that sensation is the producing cause of attention, and affords all the elements of which it consists. Sensation is a purely passive thing; we experience it just as long as the organic impression lasts, and no longer; attention is something active and voluntary, which we can continue or suspend at pleasure; the one is a production from without, the other an energy from within; the one is necessary, the other free; the one is the action of the outward world upon the inward, the other is the reaction of the inward world upon the outward. In the very first step of his reasoning, therefore, Condillac makes a fatal oversight which vitiates all the rest, and deprives the whole superstructure of sensationalism, as he had erected it, of any solid foundation.\*

The next step of his analysis is not more successful, that, namely, in which he derives the various faculties of memory, comparison, judgment, &c., from attention. When we attend to a sensation which *has been*, he argues, we are said to remember. But how, we ask, are we to do this? By what means is the sensation retained while others are rushing in upon us? Something more than mere *attention* is assuredly requisite to account for this power of *retention*. Again, comparison is said to be a double attention; but is the whole of what we mean by comparison comprised in the mere perception of the two things compared? Far from it. I

\* For a full examination of Condillac's main positions, see Cousin's "Cours d'Histtoire de la Philosophie Morale," Leçon iii.

can attend to two things without comparing them, or without being able to compare them ; comparison supposes a *balancing of relations*, *i. e.* a judgment ; mere perception supposes nothing of the kind. Still less is it possible to reduce the power of the will to this source—a power which, in its conscious freedom and spontaneous activity, is as unlike the passive phenomena of sensation as life differs from death. But into this discussion we must not enter ; enough, we trust, has been said already just to point out the fundamental error of Condillac's philosophy, enough to show that however energetically you may pour in impressions from without, the supposed statue, though replete with life, must still remain mentally dark and inactive, until the spark of reason, and the native power of the will, begin to react upon them. To sum up, then, in few words, the influence of Condillac upon the progress of philosophy, we should say that he began a consistent disciple of Locke, and ended (in everything but drawing its last conclusions) an advocate of complete sensationalism.

Another well-known writer of the eighteenth century, was Charles Bonnet, (born at Geneva 1720, died there 1793,) a man whose fame was only second to Condillac himself as the author of a vigorous and eloquent vindication of the sensational philosophy. His first writings were devoted to the illustration of nature, of whose beauty he had a deep perception. Rising, however, in regular gradation from nature to man, he produced his "*Essai Analytique sur les Facultés de l'Ame.*" In this work he treads somewhat closely in the footsteps of Condillac, using even the same illustration of the statue, and seeking to study in the same way the material that each of the senses supplies towards the formation of our ideas. In two respects, however, there is a decided difference between them. Bonnet, unlike Condillac, and much in the same manner as Hartley, employed many physiological observations to aid his mental analysis. "I have put into my book," he remarks in the preface, "a great deal of physics and very little of metaphysics ; but in truth, what could I say of the mind, in itself ? we know it so little ! Man is a mixed being ; he only has ideas by the intervention of the senses ; and even his most abstract notions are derived from them. It is upon his body, and by his body, that the mind acts. It is necessary, then, always to come back to physics as to the first origin of all which the mind experiences ; we know no more what *an idea* of the mind is, than the mind itself ; but we know that our ideas are attached to cer



tain fibres; we are able, then, to reason upon these fibres because we *see* them; we are able thus to study a little their movements, the results of their movements, and the bonds they have among themselves." Such is the use which Bonnet proposed to make of his physiological researches in the investigation of the human mind.

In another respect, however, Bonnet far surpassed Condillac, and that is in his resistance of the theory of transformed sensations, and his recognition of the mind's activity in the phenomena of attention and volition. In this respect he returns to Locke's standpoint, and even employs the term reflection to designate the active, in opposition to the passive phenomena of the mind. Bonnet was far from adopting the more extreme results of sensationalism; and it was apparently to prevent its tendency from being carried too far that he wrote his "*Palingénésie Philosophique*," in which he has advocated the immortality of the souls both of men and animals, and carried the idea of development in nature to such an extent, as to imagine that plants may become animals, animals men, and men angels.

Condillac and Bonnet left the position of speculative philosophy in France much in the same state as Hartley did in England; they all laid down the ground principles of sensationalism, but all, owing to their good sense and religious feeling, hesitated to draw the ultimate conclusions. Those conclusions, however, soon made their appearance in France to a much greater extent than they have ever done in England; so much so, indeed, that they seemed for a time entirely to absorb all other philosophy. Helvétius, Saint Lambert, and Condorcet, followed immediately in the track that had been thus pointed out, and applied the new psychological principles, which had burst with such éclat upon society, not only to philosophy generally, but more especially to the department of ethics. First of all, Helvétius, carrying this notion of empiricism to the farthest extremity it would admit, founded upon it a moral system of undisguised selfishness. His primary position is, that man owes all his superiority over the lower animals to the superior organization of his body; indeed he pushes this principle to such an extent as to affirm, that the human hand is the great agent in the world's civilization, and that, but for its capability, we should never have risen above the brutes around us. Proceeding from this point, his chief positions are briefly these. That all minds are originally equal; that every faculty and emotion they possess

is derived from sensation ; that pleasure is the only good ; and that self-interest is the true ground of morality, upon which the whole framework of individual action and political right depends.\*

Saint Lambert followed closely in the steps of Helvétius, treating first of the *nature* of man, and then of his *duties*. With regard to human nature, he maintains that man, when he first enters upon the stage of life, is simply an organized and sentient mass, and that whatever feelings or thoughts he may afterwards acquire, still they are simply different manifestations of the sensational faculty, occasioned by the pressure of his various wants and necessities. With regard to ethics, he maintains that, as man possesses only sensations, his sole good must be personal enjoyment, his only duty the attainment of it ; and that, as we may be mistaken as to what objects are really adapted to promote our pleasure, the safest rule by which we can judge of duty in particular cases is public opinion. In his "*Catéchisme Universel*," a book intended for public education, he has divided the whole mass of man's duty into three classes—his duty to himself, to his own family, and to society at large ; while the duties of religion are never mentioned, and the very name of God altogether excluded. Condorcet's fundamental doctrine of ethics is the present perfectibility of mankind, both individually and socially, by means of education ; a doctrine which he proposes to substitute in place of the sanctions both of morality and religion, as the great regenerating principle of human nature.†

The names of brilliant writers, however, crowd so thick upon us in this prolific period of French literature, that it is impossible to do more than select those which give a connected view of the regular development of the sensationalistic tendency. The crowning piece in which the ultimate results of the whole system are concentrated, was presented to the world by the Baron d'Holbach, in his "*Système de la Nature*," a work in which materialism, fatal-

\* Helvétius published his first work, "*De l'Esprit*," in 1758. It excited the greatest attention throughout Europe, and encountered much opposition. His other work, "*De l'Homme*," was published posthumously. The former is more theoretical, the later more practical ;—but both of them are founded upon the principles we have indicated.

† Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas-Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet, was born in 1743 at Ribemont. In early life he gave indications of extraordinary powers, excelled as a mathematician, was the friend of d'Alembert, and a contributor to the *Encyclopædia*. He was proscribed by the Convention in 1793, and during his concealment wrote his chief work, "*Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain*"—the object of which is to depict the progress of humanity towards social perfection up to his period, and point out the march it was still to take until its high destiny should be accomplished. His philosophy was entirely sensational, his ethics Epicuræan, and his hopes for man based altogether upon physical improvement. He poisoned himself in 1794, to save the ignominy of imprisonment or execution.

ism, and avowed atheism, all combine to form a view of human nature, which even Voltaire pronounced to be illogical in its deductions, absurd in its physics, and abominable in its morality.\* The whole history of the literary society of France, during the latter half of the eighteenth century, is, in fact, but a comment upon the progress of sensationalism towards its ultimate climax. The school of Voltaire shows us the effects of it while still incomplete, shrinking, as it yet did, from that hard materialism, that blind fatality, and that daring atheism, to which it afterwards attained. But the way to all this was already prepared; the bud was already formed, which only needed time to expand in the full light of day, in order to show its colors in their very deepest dye. In short, let any one view the brilliant circles of talent and impiety, which at once enlivened and disgraced the French capital—circles rendered famous by the wit and learning of d'Alembert, Diderot, Dupuis, Baron de Grimm, Galiani, Madame d'Epinay, not to mention others equally celebrated in the literary world, and he has a complete reflection, as from a mirror, of the philosophy of sensationalism when expanded into all its various ramifications, and at the same time brought down to the level of daily life.

But the great literary manifestation of that age and country, I mean the French Encyclopædia of Sciences, may be regarded as the most formal embodiment of the spirit of its philosophy. Nature, in her outward manifestations, is the foundation of all its researches, man is to it but a mass of organization, mind the development of our sensations, morality self-interest, and God the diseased fiction of an unenlightened and enthusiastic age. The whole intellect being thus concentrated upon the outward and material, gave rise, it is true, to the noblest discoveries in the department of physical science; but, at the same time, religion, alas! was disowned, morality degraded, and man himself made but a feeble link in the great chain of events, by which nature is inevitably accomplishing her blind but glorious designs. The storm of the Revolution to which these principles, in their political bearing, had not a little tended, broke in upon this scene of philosophical irreligion, from the confusion of which a fresh and regenerating element sprang up, which has given to the nineteenth century a new state of society, a new political constitution, and, as we shall hereafter see, a new philosophy likewise.

\* The English reader will find this work well described, and ably though briefly analyzed, in a note appended to Lord Brougham's "Discourse on Natural Theology."

Before concluding this chapter, we must just hint at the fact, that the philosophy of Locke, in addition to its mighty influence upon England and France, penetrated also into Germany. The court of Frederick the Great gathered around it many of the first literary characters of France, and thus afforded a channel by which the writings of Locke, together with those of his disciples, flowed into that country. Without occupying any space in describing the works of Feder, of his pupil Tittel, of Weisshaupt, and of others who are but little known in this country, I may just mention that Herder and Tiedemann, both celebrated for their great services in elucidating the history of philosophy, belonged, in a certain degree, to the school of Locke. Sensationalism, however, played but a feeble part in this country, as it was soon eclipsed by the great hero of idealism, who, for more than a quarter of a century, attracted to himself the eye of every philosophical inquirer as to the luminary of the age in which he lived and shone.

The whole sketch we have thus given of the sensationalistic philosophy, forms one connected illustration of the effects, which naturally flow from giving predominance to one out of the three fundamental ideas of the human mind, that, namely, of finite nature, or the not-me. As this idea is a true one, the philosophy which originates in it gives us true results in its own department, that of physical science; but as it is not *the only* fundamental idea that exists in the mind, we soon become sensible of the errors in which we are necessarily involved, when we attempt to build upon it the whole fabric of human knowledge.



## CHAPTER II.

### ON THE PROGRESS OF IDEALISM FROM THE PERIOD OF DESCARTES TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BEFORE we proceed to the historical sketch, to which this chapter is devoted, we shall occupy a few lines to remind the reader of the principle by which we are guided in forming it. We have shown that there are three fundamental notions existing in the human mind, as the primary elements of thought: 1st, that of finite self; 2dly, that of finite nature; 3dly, that of the absolute, the unconditioned, the infinite. The whole multiplicity of our conceptions are referrible to some one of these three, as the irreducible notion, or category from which it springs. The first includes all inward phenomena, the second all outward phenomena, while the third embraces those various ideas of infinity and perfection, which we attribute neither to nature nor self, but to some existence equally removed beyond both.

As these three notions universally exist in the human mind, we naturally expect to find them all three occupying a place in the philosophy of every age; and seldom, perhaps never, does such an expectation deceive us. There are many systems of philosophy which admit them all, assigning the greater importance it may be to one, or it may be to another; while there are other systems which are built up entirely upon one of the three as their foundation, to the complete exclusion of the rest. The superstructure of sensationalism, for example, when perfected, rests solely upon the basis of the *second* of these notions—that of the external or material world; and we have seen in the last chapter in what way this notion was gradually made to occupy the place of the other two, until first the finite mind of man, and at last the infinite mind of God, were reduced to matter and organization, both cognizable through the medium of the senses. In the present chapter we are to show, in a like manner, the progress of idealism from those systems which have given their chief, though not exclusive, attention to the nature and powers of the human spirit, to those in which the material

world has disappeared, and *mind* become the sole existence in the universe. As idealism, however, in the sense we have employed it, includes both the notion of self and also that of the absolute, we shall see that it sometimes assumes a subjective form, and sometimes an objective, according to the predominance of one of these notions over the other. In these different forms, for example, it played a very prominent part in the philosophy of the ancient world. As our present object, however, is not to take cognizance of it at that period, we must proceed to see in what manner and to what extent the idealistic tendency has shown itself from the commencement, and during the progress of the modern schools of metaphysical science.

SECT. I.—*First Movement as seen in Descartes, Malebranche, and Spinoza.*

Of the whole modern movement of metaphysical science we have already pointed out Bacon and Descartes as the founders; the former evincing a predominant tendency to sensationalism, the latter to idealism. For Bacon we claim the decided superiority in comprehensiveness of mind. He alone seemed to take in at one glance the whole circumference of human knowledge; he alone knew how to assign to each separate branch its proper position, to detect the prejudices by which it was impeded, and to furnish the true method by which advancement in every case was to be made. The imperfection of his philosophy, however, was its almost exclusive adaptation to the practical investigation of *nature*. Descartes, while he by no means neglected physical science, and stood forth as one of the first mathematicians of his day, yet was chiefly pre-eminent for his power of intense reflection—for his acute analysis of mind and its operations. Bacon had shown the true principles of inductive philosophy in their application to natural science. Descartes now took hold of those principles, and applied them to the investigation of the human mind. They both appealed to the observation of *facts* as the ground of all knowledge, but the one confined himself chiefly to the facts of the outer world,—while the other appealed mainly to the facts of consciousness. On this ground it is that Descartes has unquestionably merited the reputation of standing at the head of the whole mod-

ern movement of metaphysical philosophy.\* The key to this movement was furnished by the "Novum Organum;" but it was the French philosopher who applied it to the door of the human spirit, and first entered there with the lamp of *analysis* in his hand.

In reviewing the life and literary labors of Descartes, the first thing which strikes us forcibly is his complete independence of all authority. It was before he had attained his twentieth year, that he threw up the dogmas he had been taught by the Jesuits at La Flèche, and determined by the simple energy of his own mind to create a new philosophy; that is, to lay a new foundation for the whole superstructure of human knowledge. This very determination pointed out to him in part the *method* he should pursue. Left to the simple power of his own reflection, he was naturally led to assume the human *consciousness* as the true starting-point for all scientific research, and the analysis of the facts of our consciousness as the only proper method of creating a sound philosophy. In thus doing he established the fundamental principle, which we regard as the corner-stone of all the metaphysics of modern Europe, namely, that as natural science is based upon inductions drawn from the actual *observation* of the world without, so metaphysical science is based upon inductions similarly drawn from reflection upon the world within. Let us see, then, how he proceeded in this analysis.

The first thing that we are conscious of, begins Descartes, is a multiplicity of sensations, impressions, or ideas of various kinds, passing in succession before our view. But of these we soon find some to be so contradictory and others so dubious, that it is impossible for any one to admit them all as veracious. The real philosopher, indeed, will admit *none* except those which can be proved strictly consonant with the truth of things. The primary position, therefore, from which all philosophy springs is *doubt*.† Let it not be supposed from this, however, that Descartes nurtured the spirit of scepticism; doubt was never intended to be a part of his philosophical system, but merely a negation of errors and prejudices previous to the affirmation of those first irrefragable positions, on which all science was to be grounded.‡ Let us see how these positions are to be found.

\* This title is awarded him by Stewart in his "Dissertation on the Progress of Philosophy."

† See his first "Meditation," in which Descartes gives the reasons why we ought to doubt of the truth of things generally, and the uses of doubting.—N. B. The references are made to the convenient 12mo edition of M. Jules Simon. Paris: 1844.

‡ See his answer to Hobbes, p. 186.

There is one thing, he proceeds, of which we cannot doubt, and that is *thought*. If on the one hand I admit a truth, I admit it by means of my power of thinking; or, if on the other I doubt it, the very act of doubting implies the same power, inasmuch as to doubt is to think; so that no scepticism, however rigid, can by any means deny this one fact without destroying itself. Whilst, however, we are constrained to admit thought as *the first* veritable fact, we cannot but see, at the same time, that there is *a subject* to which this phenomenon belongs, and a subject, moreover, which is conscious of its own state. We conclude, therefore, that Being, intelligent, conscious Being, is implied and postulated in thinking; a truth which was expressed by Descartes in the celebrated sentence, "*Cogito, ergo sum.*"\* Few philosophical aphorisms have been more frequently repeated, few more contested than this, and few assuredly have been so little understood by those, who have held up its supposed fallacy to the greatest ridicule. Had Descartes intended this aphorism to be in the proper logical sense an argument to prove our own existence, there is no doubt but that it would be chargeable with a "*petitio principii.*" Such an intention, however, he distinctly disclaims in his reply to Gassendi, and explains his meaning to be simply this,—That the very moment there are phenomena of any kind within our consciousness, that moment the mind becomes cognizant of its own existence; and that were there no consciousness there would be no possible evidence of the existence of an intelligent principle. From this it is clear that the "*Cogito ergo sum*" of Descartes is intended to be nothing more or less than an appeal to consciousness. The question was, where am I to find the first ground of certainty—where the fundamental truth which underlies everything else? The reply of Descartes is,—You must find it in the veracity of your consciousness. You *think*, and what does thinking include? Manifestly a subject and an object—a thinking being and thought itself. By the very first act of consciousness, therefore, *the me* takes possession of, and affirms itself.

Not only is the fact of our own being, however, implied in our consciousness, but from the nature of thought, Descartes considered we could legitimately conclude respecting the nature of the mind itself; that, as the one possesses no resemblance to any of the qualities of body, the other also must be of a corresponding essence. The mind itself, therefore, he regarded as simple and spiritual in its

\* *Vid.* Second Meditation, in which his first principles are laid down.



nature, totally distinct from matter in every possible point of view.\*

A foundation being thus laid, Descartes proceeds to erect his philosophical system upon it. The human mind, whose existence and nature has now been defined, is the subject of many ideas. It is required, therefore, to determine two things—first, what is the nature of Ideas generally, and secondly, what is the criterion of their veracity. As to the nature of ideas, Descartes defines them to be “all that is in our mind when we conceive a thing, in whatever way we conceive it.” He employs the term evidently not in the sense of an image or resemblance, but in the more general sense of any thought, notion, or perception, which the mind either possesses or creates.†

The chief point, however, in the doctrine of ideas is to determine their validity—to point out some criterion by which the true can be distinguished from the false. The Cartesian criterion is that of clearness and distinctness. A distinct idea he maintains is necessarily a true one, while an indistinct idea has no guarantee about it of objective validity. This rule, in fact, like the primitive affirmation of the existence of *the me*, is nothing more than an appeal to the truth of consciousness. Whatever consciousness holds out to me as clearly and distinctly *true*, that I am bound to accept; upon such a faith in the veracity of our faculties must the very first elements of all our knowledge repose.‡

But now, when we begin to interrogate our consciousness, we find that there is *one*, out of the whole number of our conceptions, which stands forth both by its clearness and its uniqueness far above all the rest, that, namely, of an infinite and all-perfect Being. If, then, clear ideas are always objectively true, and the idea of a God is the clearest of all, we must have a direct proof from consciousness itself of the Divine existence. Here, then, we perceive the nature and validity of Descartes' famous psychological argument for the foundation principle of natural theology, which may

\* For Descartes' views on the immateriality and immortality of mind, see his second Meditation, and his Dispute upon it with Gassendi. These two of his writings have the merit of placing the doctrine of the spirituality of mind upon its firmest foundation. Consult on this subject Damiron's “Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie au xvième Siècle,” chap. iii. Mr. Hallam also awards him the honor of being the father of modern spiritualism—“Lit. of Europe,” vol. ii. p. 442. His material theory of Memory or Imagination, however, shows the influence which the current materialism of the age still had upon him.

† For Descartes' classification of ideas into forms of Thought, Passion, and Will, consult the “Traité des Passions,” first Part. He elsewhere divides them into *adventitious*, *factitious*, and *innate*.

‡ Meditation IV.

be stated as follows. The idea of an all-perfect, infinite Being is without controversy in my mind. How could it have come there? Not from the outer world, not from education, not from *any* finite source—for the finite and imperfect could never give me the conception of the perfect and the Infinite, the effect never transcend the cause. Hence, if I have incontestably the clear idea of God, a God must necessarily exist.\*

The reality of the Divine existence, as of an all-perfect Being, having been thus established, Descartes now uses it as a *fixed truth*, by which to establish the veracity of other and previously doubtful facts. When we begin to reason about things within or around us, we find ourselves able to arrive by rigid deduction at certain conclusions. In this way, for example, we come to the fixed truths of geometry and natural philosophy, truths which have not the evidence of direct consciousness, but only that of clear demonstration. What, then, is our evidence of the validity of this knowledge? not the criterion before laid down, for here it is inapplicable: the evidence must be that of the Divine veracity. Geometry is true, because God will not allow our faculties to deceive us respecting the actual relations of space objectively considered; and so with regard to all other deductive knowledge.

The most remarkable application of this principle is that which relates to our knowledge of the external world. In the threefold classification of our ideas, Descartes shows that there is one class which includes what we term *perceptions*, and which, we are conscious, must have some cause distinct from our will. What, then, is the cause from which they take their rise? Appeal to the senses and they give us no reply, since all we know from them are subjective phenomena. From these, then, let us appeal to our reason; and it, in reply, points us to the Being of all perfection, upon whose veracity we may fully depend, and who, we know, could not have formed our senses and constituted our minds in such a manner as to render our life one perpetual scene of deception. Hence the external world is a reality, but a reality which rests solely upon the prior evidence we have of the existence and perfections of God.†

\* Descartes has also given an ontological proof for the Being of a God, namely, that the *existence* of God is implied in the very nature or essence of the idea we have of Him, as the existence of a triangle in the conception of a triangle. For these two proofs, see *Meditations* three and five. Every *a priori* argument is virtually reducible to the psychological or the ontological process as here indicated.

† Respecting the question of the external world, we have Descartes' views in his sixth *Meditation*, where he shows generally the superior certainty and clearness of our *innate* or fundamental ideas over all other.

This argument, we may remark, implies a decided paralogism that renders it one of the weakest points in the Cartesian metaphysics. The veracity of our faculties is first appealed to, in order to establish the being of a God, and then the authority of God is appealed to, in order to establish the veracity of our faculties. The whole question is thus inclosed in a vicious circle.

The portion, perhaps, of the Cartesian doctrines, most productive of ulterior consequences, was that which refers to the relation subsisting between God and the creation. Creation itself, Descartes attributed to *the will* of the Almighty, making even necessary truth itself dependent upon that will, rather than upon the nature of things. In this doctrine, the stability of absolute truth unquestionably appears to have been somewhat compromised ; for if it be true, there is no reason why the relations of space and number, as involved in mathematical science, should not alter to-morrow, if there were a purpose for it in the mind of God. More important still, however, was his doctrine respecting the act of creation itself. To Descartes the whole dependent world, both of mind and matter, is a vast mechanism carried on by external laws ; a mechanism which requires the act of creation to be ever reproduced, in order to keep it in perpetual and harmonious operation. According to this view there can be no direct action of matter upon matter, because it is the perpetual efflux of the “*vis creatrix*” by which all such action is maintained ; and, consequently, secondary causes can be nothing more than modifications of the first cause. In like manner, also, there can be no direct influence mutually exerted upon each other by mind and matter, for the action of both is dependent upon the continuity of the creative power, as seen in the laws or mechanism of body and soul. In this one affirmation, *that the universe depends upon the productive power of God not only for its first existence, but equally so for its continued being and operation*, there is involved the germ of the several doctrines of pre-established harmony—of occasional causes—of our seeing all things in God—and, finally, of pantheism itself, the ultimate point to which they all tend. We have, it is true, in the Cartesian philosophy, all three of the primary conceptions to which we have reduced the whole mass of our intellectual phenomena. We have first the notion of self, then that of God, and lastly, by implication, that of the world. By viewing mind, however, more in the efforts of its reason than of its will, and by assigning to it innate ideas, rather than innate and active faculties, he much weakened the notion of human lib-



erty,\* and through that of personality also. By assigning, again, our sense-perceptions to divine interposition, he removed the notion of matter to a vast distance, and hewed away the chief foundations on which its reality rests; while amidst all this, the notion of the infinite and all-perfect Being, as immanent in His creation, attained a predominance great and all-absorbing, in proportion as the others were weakened and diminished.

To sum up, therefore, our estimate of Descartes' influence upon philosophy, we should say, that, while he taught the true principle of mental analysis, and deduced from it many splendid results, yet that his writings, upon the whole, tended to elevate the idea of the infinite and absolute above all others, and thus prepared the way, as we shall soon find, for a complete system of *objective idealism*.

Into the physics, the physiology, and some other branches of the Cartesian philosophy, we forbear to enter, as they are of little or no worth except to warn us, how easily the acutest minds, though starting from correct principles, may lose the road, and how soon, when blinded by a false argument, they may take the step from a rigid system of demonstration to one of improbability, utterly unsustained by evidence. Between the first and the last words which Descartes uttered in the department of philosophy, there is a distinction almost as wide asunder as the poles. His starting principle—that all philosophy begins in an analysis of the human consciousness—is the foundation of all subsequent psychological investigations down to the present day. His system, when completed, gives us, on the other hand, the infallible germ of a pure idealism.†

Amongst the followers of Descartes, we must distinguish those who embraced his philosophy *as a whole*, and evolved still further the results contained in it, from those who simply followed his *method*, and produced from it a philosophy of their own. To the former belong only his immediate successors, to the latter belong

\* Descartes' doctrine of Free Will was much disputed by the theologians of the succeeding age; perhaps it is difficult to define it very accurately, but it certainly wavered between the liberty of indifference and the necessity of Calvinism.

† The study of Descartes has revived in recent times among the French philosophers to an extraordinary degree. In 1824, M. Cousin published his whole works in 11 volumes. In 1832, M. Gruyer published his "Essais Philosophiques suivis de la Métaphysique de Descartes assemblée et mise en ordre." In 1842, appeared M. Bouillier's "Histoire et Critique de la Révolution Cartésienne." M. Jules Simon published his small edition with an admirable introduction in 1844; and in 1846, appeared M. Damiron's, "Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France au xvii<sup>me</sup> siècle," containing, in addition to his own views, a report upon six memoirs given in to the Académie des Sciences upon the Philosophy of Descartes and its effects. Other works have appeared, but the above are the most important.



all the philosophers of the rationalistic school, who flourished during the latter part of the seventeenth, and the whole of the eighteenth centuries. It is, then, with Cartesianism *as a whole*, not simply as a method, that we have now to do; and the progress of this may be summed up by a brief reference to three men, of uncommon philosophical genius, in whose writings its extreme results have been developed.\* The first of these was Arnold Geulincx, a native of Antwerp, who, in common with many more of the *litterati* of France and Holland, entered enthusiastically into the Cartesian principles on their first publication to the world. It was Geulincx, in fact, who first brought out, in its proper form, the celebrated doctrine of *occasional causes*, according to which God himself is the direct agent in all the related movements of the soul and the body, while the affections of the latter afford the *occasion* upon which he produces the corresponding sensations in the former. This was clearly an additional step taken towards the formation of a system of objective idealism.†

The next in the order of time of the three philosophers I have referred to, was Spinoza, but in the order of development we should rather assign the second place to Malebranche. They both, in fact, wrote very nearly at the same period, and to a great extent, if not entirely, independently of one another; so that there is no real error committed whichever we place first upon the list, while both are separate proofs of the actual tendency of the Cartesian principles. Malebranche, as a thinker, as a writer, and as an earnest lover of both truth and goodness, merits to stand almost at the head of the early *litterati* of his country. His thoughts are always lofty, his observations acute, his style luminous and attractive, and his spirit truthful and sincere.‡ It would be difficult to find in any language a more able prophylactic against error than is contained in his great work, "*De la Recherche de la Vérité*," or

\* The number of Descartes' followers who wrote in illustration or defence of his philosophy was very considerable. The most celebrated of these was Pierre Sylvain Regis, who wrote an elaborate "*Système de la Philosophie*," published at Paris in 1690. These professed Cartesians do not of course tend to illustrate the *progress* of the idealistic philosophy; they merely explain its state under the more immediate authority of Descartes.

† The origination of the doctrine of occasional causes is disputed. Some attribute it to De la Forge, author of a "*Traité de Esprit Humain*," published in 1666. Tennemann attributes it to Geulincx. That the latter made the greater innovations upon the original Cartesian doctrines, there can be no doubt; and even if there are some remarks which favor the theory in question in the works of De la Forge, the clear elucidation of it seems rather due to Geulincx. On the opinions of both, see Damiron's "*Essai sur xviii<sup>me</sup> siècle*," vol. ii. book 4.

‡ Leibnitz says, "*Le Père Malebranche joint à des profondes méditations, une belle manière de les exprimer.*"

more acute remarks on the various methods by which deceptions gain an influence over the mind. Our present object, however, is to view Malebranche simply in his relation to the Cartesian philosophy.

The notion of the absolute, as we have seen, had been brought by Descartes so prominently into his later philosophy, that the idea of finite mind as a self-acting and causative principle was much weakened, and its perception of the material world made to depend in every case upon the interposition of Divine power. Now, the whole of what is peculiar to Malebranche as an idealist, arose from the more intense view which he took of this feature in the Cartesian philosophy, from the still greater predominance which was thus given to the power of the first great cause, and the tendency consequently engendered of absorbing *in it*, the influence of all secondary causes throughout the universe.

The two kinds of existence that are known in the world, according to Malebranche, are body and spirit, of which the former possesses the qualities of extension and mobility, the latter the corresponding attributes of understanding and will; but as both are equally finite and dependent, and have no original source of action within themselves, no changes can take place in material things, no secondary causes exist, no effect be produced by matter upon mind, no part of the vast machinery of creation go forward, without the immediate will and power of the great first cause. Hence follows, by very easy steps, the whole of Malebranche's well-known metaphysical theory; for, since on this principle there is no action of external things upon the mind, nor any reaction of mind upon them, without the direct interposition of the Deity; and since the *ideas* of all things must exist in the mind of the Creator, (as Plato had so abundantly demonstrated,) the most natural conclusion was, that the human mind sees everything in the Divine, and that God himself is our intelligible world. We have no further occasion, therefore, to attempt the solution of the knotty point upon which so many philosophers had toiled, namely, the method by which matter and spirit mutually affect each other, it being entirely solved on this one simple principle, that it is in God that our minds live and move and have their being. What, then, it might be rejoined to this, (if we only see the archetypes of things in God,) is the use of the material world at all, and why should we assume its existence? To this Malebranche replies by appealing to revelation, which assures us that in the beginning God created the heavens

and the earth; so that the very existence of matter was made by him to depend upon the interpretation of a passage of Scripture, which interpretation only needed to be invalidated, in order to plunge us at once into complete idealism. The whole effect of Malebranche's philosophy, accordingly, was to merge all secondary causes into the one infinite cause; to diminish, proportionally, the notion of human liberty, and to suspend the whole material world upon one slender thread, which it merely required a little exegetical ingenuity to snap forever asunder.\*

It is to Spinoza, however, that we must attribute the honor (if, indeed, it is to be esteemed such) of drawing forth from the Cartesian principles their ultimate results.† Descartes and Malebranche both aimed at employing a strictly consecutive method in their philosophy, and both were led, more or less, into error, by attempting to ground upon demonstration what really can only rest upon the direct authority of our consciousness. Spinoza, animated with a still higher love of this same method, commenced his philosophical career by an attempted reduction of the Cartesian principles to the geometrical form; to which attempt he added some further ideas (termed by him "*Cogitata metaphysica*," ) that were intended to point out various other developments of the same philosophy. These, however, cannot be considered as belonging to the development of Spinozism, properly so called; they were merely lectures on the Cartesian philosophy reduced to the form most in accordance with the natural genius of the author, and accompanied by a few illustrative hints. The only other work he published *himself*, is entitled "*Tractatus Theologico-politicus*," the object of which was to clear up the difficult ground that lies between religion and politics. His principal works, containing in fact the whole of his

\* It is needless to remark that we have only designed to give here that characteristic of Malebranche's philosophy, which bears upon the progress of idealism. To appreciate the Platonic sublimity, the philosophic depth, the practical wisdom and the Christian purity of his mind, he must be read and studied. His principal work, "*De la Recherche de la Vérité*," is divided into six books. He first points out the errors and bewilderments which arise from implicitly trusting to the senses. In this he strongly evinces his idealism, by invalidating all the ordinary evidences for the existence of a material world. In the second book he discusses the errors of imagination. This, however, is encumbered by a material theory, similar to that of Descartes himself. The third book on Pure Spirit is the most interesting of all. In this, his theory of seeing all things in God, is fully developed. The next two books treat of the various propensities and passions, of human nature, viewed as sources of error and evil. The last book points out the method we ought to follow in the search after truth. His other works are "*Conversations Chrésiennes*," "*Méditations Chrésiennes*," "*Entretiens sur la Métaphysique*," "*Traité de la Nature et de la Grâce*," and "*Traité de Morale*."

† Leibnitz called Spinoza's philosophy "*Extreme Cartesianism*."—N.B. The quotations on Spinoza are taken from the edition of M. Saisset (Paris, 1843,) as by far the most convenient for the general reader to refer to.



philosophy, properly so called, were only published after his death, and it is from these that we shall attempt to draw as clear an account of his system, as our necessary brevity and its frequent obscurity will admit.

The real foundation of Spinoza's system is to be found in his posthumous fragment "De Intellectus Emendatione."\* In this fragment we have a general investigation of the different methods by which knowledge is communicated to the human mind. First of all, we gain a number of ideas, either by mere hearsay, or by the vague experience of the senses.† This is termed in the Ethics, knowledge of the first kind. Next, we may gain ideas by direct inference from other ideas, that is, by the effort of the logical faculty or understanding. But, lastly, knowledge, properly so called, only arises when by an effort of the reason we grasp the very essence of things, when we gaze upon *being* itself.‡ Upon the validity of this intellectual intuition (a direct application of Descartes' appeal to the authority of consciousness,) the very axioms of Spinoza's system must wholly rest.

From the vestibule of Spinozism we may now go into the temple. Let it be admitted that the reason of mankind, looking through the veil of passing phenomena, seeks after something fixed and abiding. That it must find some resting place, some ultimate unalterable idea, that supposes no other beyond it, is evident, otherwise the process of abstraction would go on to infinity (regressus in infinitum). Such an idea Descartes found in the notion of absolute perfection; but then, rejoins Spinoza, what is perfection but the mere attribute of some perfect *Being*? The fundamental idea therefore can only be found in Being itself, *i. e.* in the notion of a *substance*, which is absolutely self-existent, and needs no other conception besides itself to render it complete and intelligible.§

\* A reviewer, to whom reference has already been made, denies the propriety of grounding Spinoza's system upon his *Psychology*, and describes it as turning the reasoning upside down. I rather doubt from his supposition (that I was referring here to the second book of the Ethics, "De Mente"), whether he was *himself* well acquainted with the fragment above quoted. To me it is perfectly clear, that Spinoza intended that work to be a *preparative* to his Ethics, that he saw with Descartes the necessity of grounding his dogmatism in a critique of the consciousness. (on which all first principles must repose,) and that his system really *begins* in his psychological survey. M. Saisset remarks on this point—"Génie essentiellement réfléchi, élevé à une école sévère celle de Descartes, Spinoza n'ignorait pas qu'il n'y a point en philosophie de problème, antérieur à celui de la méthode. La nature et la portée de l'entendement humain, l'ordre légitime de ses opérations, la loi fondamentale qui les doit régler, tous ces grands objets avaient occupé ses premières méditations, et il ne cessa de s'en inquiéter pendant toute sa vie. Nous savons *qu'avant d'écrire son éthique*, il avait jeté les bases d'un traité complet sur la méthode," (namely, in the work "De Intellectus Emendatione.")—(Euvres, p. 16.

† Vol. ii p. 280.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 281.

§ Eth. Def. iii. book i.



But, then, how are we to comprehend substance in its real nature and essence? Manifestly by means of its attributes, for attribute is that which our reason conceives of as *constituting* its essence.\*

The attributes under which we conceive of Substance are two, extension and thought, both of which must be infinite, as belonging to an infinite being; not indeed infinite absolutely, but relatively to the substratum in which they exist. But these two attributes appear in an endless variety of aspects, which we may term *modes*.† Modes, then, express the nature of attributes, and attributes the nature of substance, so that here we have all existence, absolute and relative, embraced in the three ideas of substance, attributes, modes. The absolute self-existent substance is God; everything else must be attributes and modes, under which that substance appears.

God then exists. The proof of his existence is identical with that of one infinite, eternal, self-existent substance. Moreover, it is demonstrable, that there can be but one substance in the universe; for one substance cannot be produced by another, according to its very definition, as being self-existent.‡ Hence, God is not only *one* but there can be no real essential existence besides; he is *το παν*, the great universal *all*.

The whole nature of God can now be determined. The fact of his self-existence involves the idea of *freedom*; for what can there be to oppose and limit his power? This freedom or essential activity, therefore, joined with the two attributes above mentioned, involve the following results—First, that God is free, yet free in a sense which excludes the idea of volition or will; free only as ever unfolding his own essential being, without obstruction or restraint.§ Secondly, that God has infinite extension, yet, so as not to imply anything *material*, but only pure abstract extension.|| Thirdly, that God eternally thinks, but contemplates only *himself*, without ideas, without the flow of consciousness, without an understanding in the ordinary sense. His intelligence is one eternal, unchangeable gaze upon truth, *i. e.* upon himself.¶

But now the question arises, how are we to explain the existence and nature of the phenomenal world? The relation of the infinite to the finite, is one of the most difficult problems which philosophy has ever undertaken to unravel. Some have had re-

\* De Deo, Def. iv.

§ Ibid. Prop. xvii.

† De Deo, Def. v.

|| De Deo, Part II. prop. ii.

‡ Ibid. Prop. vi.

¶ Ibid. Part II. prop. i.

course to the dualistic hypothesis, which supposes an eternal existence of matter, co-ordinate with God. Others have imagined the phenomenal world to be the direct product of creative power, God bringing all things out of nothing. These theories we see at once are entirely inadmissible on the principles of Spinozism, already laid down. Here God is not a creating mind, but *Being-itself*, the one unchangeable essence, which underlies everything else. Thought and extension both exist as perfections absolutely in God, but thought and extension would ever be but vain and empty abstractions, unless they were referred as attributes to *Being*. Hence, any particular thought, and any particular extension can be nothing but mere abstractions, unless *they* are referred to absolute thought and absolute extension, such as exist only in Deity himself.\* Being, then involves as attributes, infinite thought and infinite extension; these attributes involve an infinite number of finite determinations, and these determinations constitute the phenomenal world; those of the infinite thought giving rise to finite minds, those of the infinite extension to all material existences.†

God, then, may be viewed, according to Spinoza, in two different aspects, first, as the eternal substance, possessing in himself infinite attributes and mode of Being; and, secondly, as the self-existent *one*, developing himself, and expanding into an infinite number of finite determinations. The one is *natura naturans*, the other *natura naturata*; the one, the absolute, containing all things *potentially* within its infinite nature; the other, the absolute, unfolding that nature into all the modifications of thought and extension of which the universe consists. Hence, God is, in a most pregnant sense, the cause of all things, inasmuch as all things are but modes of his own infinite attributes; or, in the words of the author, "*Deus est omnium rerum causa immanens, non transiens.*"‡

That Spinoza affirmed the existence of a God, and affirmed it so earnestly, as to merit the appellation given him by Novalis, of "the god-intoxicated man," may be readily admitted in a certain sense; but that he allowed the existence of a God in the ordinary and Christian acceptation of that word, is far from being the case

\* See M. Saisset's *Introd.* p. lxxx.

† *De Deo*, prop. xxv. and corollary.

‡ *Ibid.* prop. xv. xvi. xviii. xxi. xxiii. Also in Part II. Def. i. matter is defined—"A mode which expresses in a certain determined manner the essence of God, inasmuch as we consider God as a thing extended."

A Being to whom understanding, will, and even personality is denied; a being who does not create but simply *is*, who does not act but simply unfolds, who does not purpose, but brings all things to pass by the necessary law of his own existence—such a being cannot be a father, a friend, a benefactor, in a word, cannot be a *God* to man, for man is but a part of himself. It may be more correct to term the philosophy of Spinoza, a pantheism than an atheism; but if we take the common idea or definition of Deity as valid, then assuredly we must conclude that the God of Spinoza is no God, and that his pantheism is only a more imposing form of atheism.

There is throughout all Spinoza's reasoning, a vast ambiguity lying concealed in the word *substance*. Taking it as implying *Being per se*, he succeeds admirably in proving that it must be uncreated, eternal, divine; but this is no *proof* of the impossibility of the act of creation. Why should the term *substance* be confined to this precise definition, why should it not include Being *per alium* as well as Being *per se*? If this be admissible, the pantheistic basis crumbles beneath his feet, the old stand-point is regained, that God is the efficient *cause* of all things, not the *essence* of which all things consist.

Having discussed the nature of God, Spinoza proceeds in the second part of his *Ethics* (*De Mente*), to expound his theory respecting man. The mind of man, as was before shown, must be essentially and substantially a portion of the divine thinking; regarded individually or phenominally, it must be a *succession of different modes* of the infinite *thought*. But this is not all: the mind of man is closely united to the body, which is a mode of the divine *extension*. Man, therefore, consists in the perfect connection or identity of these two modes of the divine nature; the mind is a mode of the divine thought, the body of the divine extension, and both are alike attributes of the same substance. Accordingly, mind and body are essentially *one*; they are two different, but corresponding representations of the one divine essence. The body is the *object* of the mind, the mind the *idea* of the body, and they are united to each other through life, not because there is any *direct* connection between them, but because there is a fundamental unity.\*

Having thus explained the nature of the soul generally, Spinoza

\* Part II. prop. x. xi. xiii. It will be seen that this is the full development of the Cartesian doctrine of occasional causes, viewed in the light of a pantheistic philosophy.



proceeds to deduce logically, and connectedly, a whole theory of psychology.\* Mind itself not being an *existence*, but only an *idea*, or succession of ideas, all mental phenomena must be ideas likewise, that is, must be mind in its different states. The term *understanding* embraces all the phenomena included under the term knowledge. First of all, the mind, by virtue of its connection with its own body, comprehends all the various affections of body in general; this is knowledge of the secondary kind, which is generally referred to sensation as the source, and which Spinoza terms *vague experience*.† Besides this sensible intuition, however, which is a mode of thought determined by other modes, and consequently vague and inadequate, there is also an intellectual intuition, by which we gaze at once upon the infinite attributes of Being itself. This knowledge is clear, distinct, and adequate.‡ Between these two extremes comes the region of deductive knowledge, which is clear and adequate as far as it goes, but does not grasp the first principles of truth, and consequently is incomplete.§ From this theory of the understanding, Spinoza describes the sources of error, and determines the validity of knowledge, properly so called.

In the third part of the *Ethics*, we are introduced to the origin and nature of the passions. All existence is a chain, of which each part is dependent upon the rest. Every particular *mode* of the divine extension and thought exists apart from the infinite essence, by a balance of forces, which keep it distinctively in being. The human mind is simply a link in the chain of existence, and is retained in being distinct from the infinite essence, by the activity which operates from within upon the world around, and by the action of all other things upon it. *Man is a balance of powers, and the tension by which he subsists is termed passion*. If there is a perfect equilibrium between the mind and everything else, passion is silent; it still exists, but exists only as a force, which is exactly counteracted by other forces bearing upon it. If the mind pass from a less state of action to a greater, overcoming the powers by which it is controlled, then we experience *joy*; if it pass from a greater state of action to a less, then we experience *grief*. From these two all the other passions are generated.

The fourth and fifth part of the *Ethics* refer to the slavery and freedom of the will, the former arising from the entire subjugation

\* This does not exclude the use of those higher processes of psychology, by which the validity of his primary axioms is established. That the method of reflection is primarily necessary, he has affirmed in his "*Tractatus*," p. 162.

† *De Mente*, prop. xvi. and xxiv. to xxix. ‡ *Ibid.* prop. xi. § *Ibid.* schol. ii.



of the higher reason to the passions, the latter from putting the passions under control of the reason. It is clear, however, that in the proper sense of the word, freedom can have no place in the system of Spinoza, with reference either to man or to God. Everything wears the aspect of a vast mechanism, moving forward by the impulse of eternal fate. God is free from all outward constraint, but is a *necessary* Being as regards the laws of his eternal development. Man is *termed* free, as containing within him a certain amount of action; but he lives and acts from first to last, a link in the chain of fate, by the same inexorable necessity.

Hence, there is a twofold aspect in which Ethics may be viewed. Regarding man on the one hand in his phenomenal, or on the other hand in his absolute relations, we may estimate good and evil, vice and virtue, merit and demerit, either on the lower ground of mere phenomena, or on the higher ground of absolute reality. If we look at human life on the lower ground, if we regard all things simply as they seem to the senses and the imagination, then man *appears* to be a free agent; but it is an appearance perfectly false and delusive. We term things contingent, just because we are unable by the senses to rise upwards to the contemplation of the great law by which they are eternally fixed. We *seem* to have the notions of good and evil, but they are merely mutilated or inadequate conceptions, suited to the delusive belief of a free agency, which does not really exist. In this sphere of our knowledge, good is synonymous with what is agreeable, evil with what is injurious. Every man's desire must be the law of his practical life. He has no choice but to follow out his passions to whatsoever they may prompt him. Self-enjoyment and self-preservation are in fact the sole rule of his conduct. The difference between the good man and the bad is simply that the former has a greater sum of *action* and consequent enjoyment in him than the latter. Right is the only correlate of power, and can never be really violated except by a deficiency of might; so that the object of all government is the exercise of force, and all law is limitation. In this respect the philosophy of Hobbes and Spinoza, *i. e.* the extremes of sensationalism and idealism, meet, and evolve the same conclusions.

These conclusions, so sweeping in their nature, and terrible in their moral results, were afterwards contravened by viewing man in his pure and absolute relations. Here reason comes into action, and gazing not upon phenomena, but upon reality, lifts us upwards

into a spiritual life, where everything appears under a new aspect. From this elevation we look down with pity and contempt upon those who are the slaves of the senses—the victims of passion. The perfect life we now see to be the life of pure reason; in which we rise to the contemplation of God, and by means of which the divine thought realizes itself in us. Here all passion, all contention, all delusion, ceases. Raised to a perfect union with the Divine essence, we are filled with the knowledge and the love of God, in which knowledge and love we find at length the perfection, the bliss, and eternal repose of our being.\*

Such are the general outlines of Spinoza's philosophy—a philosophy in which our whole individuality is absorbed in the Divine substance, in which human freedom gives place to the most absolute fatalism, and in which God, deprived of all personality, becomes synonymous with the universe, embracing in himself alone its endless phenomena.

The foundation of all these results is to be found in the full expansion of the error, in which, as we have seen, both Descartes and Malebranche were involved. Both these philosophers admitted the three fundamental notions of the human reason—the finite self, finite nature, and the absolute; but they manifested a constantly increasing tendency to make the last predominant, while they proportionally narrowed the sphere of the two former. Malebranche, as we saw, went so far as to deny all secondary causes, and to rest the evidence of the material world simply on revelation. One more step only was needed to complete this movement of objective idealism, and absorb both man and nature in God. This is precisely the fundamental principle of Spinozism—a principle upon which he has built a system of metaphysical and ethical philosophy with the most rigid logic and admirable ingenuity.

With Spinoza, the development of Cartesianism, properly so called, ended. He pushed its principles to their utmost length, exhibited the results to which they must necessarily give rise, evolved a twofold system of ethics, which to most minds appear absolutely contradictory of each other, and left a monument of his

\* The sentiments we have briefly combined in the above two or three paragraphs, are developed in the last two parts of the Ethics. The whole of the reasoning is here so closely connected, that it is useless to refer to any particular propositions in connection with so brief and popular a view as I have thought it best to give in the text. The reader who seeks further information, can procure M. Saisset's French edition, and will find an admirable guide to the study of the whole system in his introductory Essay.

genius, which multitudes have admired, but no one has ever fully adopted. We come back, therefore, now to our own country, that we may inquire what tendencies towards idealism, and what effects of the Cartesian philosophy, meanwhile manifested themselves in the land of Bacon and Hobbes.

## SECT. II.—*Second Movement—English Polemical Idealism.*

The idealistic school, which we have just reviewed, was an original one, and seemed to flow naturally from the very mental constitution and tendencies of those by whom it was founded and perfected. The same remark, we shall hereafter see, may be applied perhaps to an equal extent to that school of German idealism, which, in the present day, has borne such abundant fruits. With the English idealism the case is different; for whenever this tendency has manifested itself strongly in our country, it has rather been brought out in opposition to the growing errors of sensationalism, than arisen from any spontaneous movement of the national mind. We would not, indeed, deny altogether to the national mind of our country (as sometimes has been done) the vigorous power of purely abstract thinking; but still the fact is not to be disputed, that the practical element has ever been in the ascendancy, and that the rationalistic method of philosophizing has seldom been carried to any great extent, except it has been occasioned and almost necessitated by the excesses of the opposite school. Hence we designate the early English movement in this direction by the appellation of *polemical idealism*.

Every energetic movement of sensationalism in the philosophical history of our country has opposed to it a corresponding movement of idealism. It was the materialism of Hobbes which *first* gave rise to the rationalistic method in England, and after that, it was the empiricism of Locke which nourished it; it was Locke's sceptical successors again, who drove the idealistic tendency forward to the extreme of Berkeleyism; while it was Hume who roused up the warfare in which the present metaphysical school of Scotland was cradled. To the men, therefore, who took the chief part in these contests, it is our pre-duty to revert.

The materialism of Hobbes was one of the boldest attempts at forming a complete system of human knowledge which the his-

tory of philosophy exhibits, and it was conveyed in that logical, and at the same time earnest, popular, and attractive style, which could not fail to acquire for it considerable attention. Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury was a contemporary with Hobbes, and though he is not to be regarded as a direct opponent, (inasmuch as none of his works were written with this precise end in view) yet it was undoubtedly the prevalence of ultra-Baconian principles, which he saw spreading around him, that gave rise to the opposite principles, which that acute philosopher advocated. Much as this writer has fallen out of notice, yet in his works is to be found the germ of almost all the arguments which were afterwards brought forward in support of the ideal or *a priori* element in human knowledge. He asserted, as strongly as Descartes did, the doctrine of innate ideas, and maintained as well the existence of a rational instinct (*rationalis instinctus*) as the source at once of man's highest knowledge, and of his purest religious sentiment. The opposition in which his philosophy stands to that of Hobbes, as well as to that which Locke afterwards originated, is seen from his fundamental position—that the mind, instead of being like a blank sheet of paper, is like a closed book. This book, he shows, is opened by the aid of experience, that is, by the influence of the external world acting through the senses, and when opened, shows a number of general principles (*communes notiones*) inscribed there, to which every question must be ultimately referred as to a common and infallible standard. On the question of religion, it is true, his conclusions were as much too sweeping on the one side, as Hobbes's were on the other, inasmuch as he advocated a system of complete rationalism; but on purely philosophical questions, few men, as unaided and independent thinkers, have come nearer to the truth respecting some of the most important points, than did the philosopher of Cherbury.\*

\* The principal work of Lord Herbert is a "Tractatus de veritate prout distinguitur a revelatione, a verisimili, a possibili, et a falso," London, 1645. This work is now little known, owing most probably to the frequent obscurity of the style rendering it repulsive to general readers. The author begins by laying down a number of axiomatic truths, which may be taken as fixed points to start from. Next, he makes a classification of the kinds of truth, which we can imagine to exist in the world. From this he passes on to the *conditions*, under which we can be said to comprehend truth; and it is here that he explains particularly his theory of "communes notiones," which comes, in fact, very near to that of Kant on the forms of the understanding. After developing his theory of the *natural instinct*, as the faculty from which these common notions arise, he ends by applying his psychology to the subject of religion. The best English account of Lord Herbert's writings is, I believe, that of Mr. Hallam, "Lit. of Europe," vol. ii. p. 381. See also Tennemann's "Grundriss," p. 358. [I have just seen in addition, the analysis of Sir W. Hamilton, which is admirably clear and succinct.] (Reid's collected Writings, p. 781.)



The professed antagonist of Hobbism, however, was Richard Cumberland, Bishop of Peterborough, a man of the most extensive learning, and conversant with every branch of philosophy as it then existed. It was to the moral principles which Hobbes advocated that the chief hostility was generally felt, and accordingly the polemical philosophy of this period, led on by Cumberland, was for the most part confined to the department of *ethics*. To the unqualified egotism of Hobbes, this prelate opposed certain connate principles, termed by him *laws of nature*, according to which men are prompted to the exercise of all the social feelings, and to the construction of the whole framework of society. These laws he considered to be cognizable by *right reason*—reason being the supreme judge of right and wrong, the discerner of the great law of benevolence impressed upon the whole constitution and course of nature. The points, therefore, where Cumberland shows a leaning to the rationalistic method, are those in which he makes reason the judge of all our moral relations, and maintains the existence of certain natural laws, quite unconnected with experience, which impel us both to the perception and performance of moral duties.\*

Contemporary with Cumberland was another thinker of the same order, but of still greater compass, if not of greater originality of mind. Amongst all the early philosophical writers of our country, there is no one who displayed so complete a mastery over the metaphysical systems of antiquity, and no one who has left behind him so vast a monument of varied and accurate learning, as Ralph Cudworth, the author of the "Intellectual System." He belonged to a company of Cambridge theologians, sometimes called Arminians, sometimes Latitude-men, or Latitudinarians, but more accurately denominated Platonic divines, who to a sincere love of Christianity, and a corresponding purity of life, united a deep admiration for the philosophy of Plato. From this source there was infused into the philosophical principles of Cudworth, a strong tendency to the same species of lofty idealism, which distinguished the writings of the great founder of the Academy. Deeply im-

\* Cumberland's great work, "*De Legibus Naturæ*," is important as being the first in which the principles of morals and natural right are investigated upon a purely philosophical basis, apart from the speculations of the ancient moralists. In his theory respecting the common good as containing the essence of virtue, he is the forerunner of the utilitarian systems; while in his investigation of the moral laws that may be found impressed upon the whole course of nature, he gave the germ which Butler afterwards so fruitfully developed. For a full account of Cumberland's work, consult Hallam's "*Lit. of Europe*," also some remarks by Sir. James Mackintosh, in his "*Dissertation on Ethical Philosophy*."

bued with the spirit of that soaring philosophy, which regarded matter as the basis of everything grovelling, and which only admitted true science at all to exist, until the soul, shaking off the trammels of sense, gazes immediately upon the pure ideas of the Divine mind, he looked with alarm and contempt upon a system, like that of Hobbes, which made matter or body the object of all philosophy, and brought down to the level of sense the most pure and ethereal elements of the human consciousness. Convinced that such principles would degrade humanity, would involve the grossest fatalism, and would banish God himself from the universe which he had made, Cudworth formed the plan of tracing all such errors up to their primary source, of exposing their futility, and of tearing up by their roots doctrines, which he saw must tend to destroy all moral distinctions, and overturn all religious worship. The "Intellectual System" was the product of this design, in which he combats every possible form of atheism with much acute reasoning and most amazing learning. This formed, however, only the first part of his proposed task; it is evident from the preface that he contemplated two other parts to complete it.

He shows in the introduction to that work, that there are *three* false hypotheses of the universe, or three possible modes of fatalism; the first of which is absolute atheism, the second a theism without morality or religion, and the third a theism which admits moral distinctions and religious worship, but yet which makes no stand against fatalism by an enlightened doctrine of human liberty.\* Atheism, then, is demolished in the work to which we have already referred, namely, the "Intellectual System." The treatise on *Eternal and Immutable Morality*, published after his death, was in all probability the sketch of the second part; and there now exists among his manuscripts in the British Museum a "Discourse on Liberty and Necessity," which we have every reason to believe was the outline of the third.†

It is in the second treatise, that on "*Eternal and Immutable*

\* "Fatalists that hold the necessity of human actions may be reduced to three heads. 1st, Such as, asserting the Deity, suppose it irrespectively to decree and determine all things, and thereby make all actions necessary to us. 2dly, Such as suppose a Deity, that, acting wisely, but necessarily, did contrive the general frame of things in the world; from whence, by a series of causes, doth unavoidably result whatsoever is done in it. And, lastly, such as hold the material necessity of all things without a Deity."—*Intellectual System*, Book I. sec. i.

It will be observed that Cudworth takes up these three hypotheses in the *inverse* order to that in which they are here stated. The edition from which the above passage is quoted, is the first, published in London, 1678.

† This last Discourse, I find, was published about ten years ago.

Morality," that Cudworth shows more especially his firm opposition to every species of sensationalism. He points out there with great clearness the fact, that the mind of man possesses pure conceptions (*νοήματα*), which cannot possibly be derived from the senses; and maintains, with Plato, that these are no other than the eternal truths, which must ever have existed in the mind of God, and to the perception of which the human mind may ever increasingly attain. "If we reflect," he says, "on our own cogitations of these things (*νοήματα*), we shall sensibly perceive that they are not phantastical, (*i. e.* imaged to us by the senses,) but noëmatical; as, for example, justice, equity, duty, obligation, cogitation, opinion, intellection, volition, memory, verity, falsity, cause, effect, genus, species, nullity, contingency, possibility, impossibility, and innumerable others."\* The rationalistic or ideal tendency of Cudworth shines forth most clearly throughout the whole of this treatise. In the second chapter of the fourth book we have the two elements of human knowledge—that from sense and that from reason—almost as clearly pointed out as it was afterwards by Kant himself. Speaking of the phenomena of nature, he says, "For the sense of man and brute there appears nothing else in it, but as in other so many inky scrawls; *i. e.* nothing but figures and colors. But to the mind, which hath a participation of the Divine wisdom that made it, and being printed all over with the same archetypal seal, upon occasion of those sensible delineations, and taking notice of whatsoever is cognate to it, exerting its own inward activity from thence, will have not only a wonderful science, and large prospects of other thoughts laid open before it, and variety of knowledge, logical, mathematical, and moral, displayed; but also clearly read the Divine goodness and wisdom in every page of this great volume, as it were, written in large and legible characters." After the systematic inculcation of such sentiments as these, we may without hesitation place him down as the great philosopher of his age, in whose works we find a complete counterpoise against the more popular but far less erudite writings of Hobbes.

Cudworth died about four years after the publication of Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding," so that we may regard him as closing the controversy against Hobbes, and representing the final state of the rationalistic philosophy before Locke introduced a new era into the history of metaphysics. The next appearance, therefore, which the idealistic tendency made in

\* Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality, p. 140. London, 1731.

England, was the reaction that took place after Locke's death, against the principles he had advocated in his Essay.

Lord Shaftesbury, who had been an intimate friend and companion of Locke, was one of the first to point out the dangerous influence which his total rejection of all innate practical principles was likely to exert upon the interests of morality. So strongly did he feel this, that in one of his Letters, in which he is denouncing the popular deism of his day, he says, "It was Mr. Locke that struck at all fundamentals, threw all order and virtue out of the world, and made the very ideas of these (which are the same as those of God) unnatural and without foundation in our minds." Not that Shaftesbury admitted the existence of innate ideas in the Cartesian sense, or held any principles that could lead to a system of pure idealism; but he saw clearly the consequences to which Locke's sensationalism must ultimately lead, and maintained that if we have no ideas actually innate, yet we have a nature and a reason so constituted, that they necessarily give rise to many absolute conceptions, which could never have been derived simply from the intimations of our senses. To the just and elegant observations of Shaftesbury upon ethical questions, the subsequent speculations of Butler and others were not a little indebted; his in many cases were the germs of thought, which they more fully expanded.\*

Wollaston, the acute author of the "Religion of Nature Delinated," must also be regarded as an opponent of Locke's fundamental principles. The ground he takes in his ethical system, namely, that virtue consists in acting according to the *truth of things*, is a sufficient proof that he regarded some conceptions as absolutely necessary, and as originating in the very constitution of man's rational nature.

The great metaphysician, however, of this period, and unquestionably one of the first that our country has produced, was Dr. Samuel Clarke.† He came upon the stage just in the very heat of the controversy, which arose soon after the death of Locke, respecting the philosophical and the moral principles which that great thinker had advocated, and opposed himself to the sceptics,

\* See particularly his "Characteristics," treatise the fourth, in which many cursory suggestions occur, which show how near the author was to the development of the theory of a *moral sense*. Leibnitz was an enthusiastic admirer of the writings of Shaftesbury; and Mackintosh (Dissertation, p. 93) considers that they "contain more intimations of an original and important nature on the theory of ethics, than perhaps any preceding work of modern times."

† Born at Norwich 1675, died 1729.



who were driving these principles to excess, with a rigor and power of argumentation very rarely to be found even amongst philosophers themselves. There were three points upon which Clarke more especially bent the whole of his mental energy; in all of which he showed his strong opposition to sensationalism, and evinced a decided tendency to the rationalistic method of philosophy.

The first of these was his celebrated argument for the being of a God, as furnishing the foundation principle of natural theology. This argument rests upon the fact, that we have the conceptions of *time* and *space*, expressive of certain attributes or qualities—the one eternal, the other illimitable in its nature. But every quality must have a co-existent subject to which it belongs; and therefore, he argues, there must exist *a being* who possesses these attributes of infinity; that is, there must be a God.\* The similarity between Clarke's argument and that of Spinoza in many points, is at once evident. They both started with the idea of necessary *existence*, showing that if anything exist *now*, *something* must have existed from eternity. The distinction between the two arguments arises from their different determination of the *absolute idea*, from which our reasoning must commence. Clarke affirmed the idea of infinite *attributes* to be fundamental, and then *inferred* an infinite substance. Spinoza began with the infinite substance, and inferred the attributes. The result was, that the latter rested finally in the notion of substance as identical with God, and reduced the common theism to pantheism; the former, reasoning from the attributes, was open upon other evidence to conceive of them as existing in a Divine personality,—in the God of Christianity. The clearness, however, with which both grasped the idea of *the infinite*, as one of the necessary conceptions of the human mind, is in either case abundantly manifest.

The second point for which Clarke is celebrated, is his theory respecting the ground of morals. Here he contends that there are certain fixed relations in the universe, cognizable by the human reason, and that all virtue consists in acting according to the *fitness of things*. That this theory of morals is correct, we should by no means admit, inasmuch as it leaves out altogether the emotional element in our moral nature; but still it serves us for another

\* Clarke's "Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God," was first delivered in two courses of sermons delivered at the Boylean Lecture in Oxford, and afterwards published with the above title, London, 1705. The argument above explained may be viewed as a kind of appendix to his main argument, grounded on *necessary existence*.

illustration of the idealistic tendency by which his philosophy was characterized, and shows the advance which was making towards sound principles in morals, as well as in metaphysics.\*

The third point (that on which Clarke's philosophical fame chiefly rests, and to which he devoted a very considerable portion of his life) was his controversy upon liberty and necessity—a controversy in which he stood opposed to Leibnitz and Collins, and by which he endeavored to overturn, finally, the fatalistic conclusions of Spinozism. Throughout this contest, the victory in which was claimed on both sides, Clarke maintained most powerfully the doctrine of Free-will, and accordingly here, also, manifested his opposition to the philosophy which tends to merge the idea of self either into that of nature or of God. Of the three fundamental conceptions, therefore, from which all philosophy springs, those of finite self, and the infinite, held in the writings of Clarke by far the most prominent place; so that we may properly regard him as the chief representative of the idealistic tendency during the age immediately succeeding Locke, as Cudworth was during the age that immediately preceded him.†

The abstruse controversies which were carried on in the manner just described, between the deistical writers of the age, and the metaphysical theologians by whom they were opposed, exerted an influence anything but favorable to the interests of religion. This arose partly from the prominence which was thus afforded to the objections of an acute scepticism; and partly from the abstruse manner, devoid, as it appeared, of all religious *feeling*, by which these objections were answered. Hence originated several bold and remarkable attempts to remove the scene of the deistic controversy away from an arena so remote from men's ordinary habits of thought, as that upon which it had been hitherto carried on, and to concentrate it upon the more general objections that were then raised against revealed religion as a whole.

\* Clarke's moral system is contained in a "Discourse on the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion." His vindication of the disinterestedness of virtuous action, and the absolute character of *right*, is worthy of the highest admiration, and does not fall behind Kant himself in its elevated view of moral law, as resting upon the very nature of God. Had he taken into account the moral feelings, and the supremacy of conscience, little would have been wanting for a complete system of ethics.

† See his "Philosophical Inquiry," concerning human liberty. London, 1715. Also his Letter to Dodwell, in which he has argued with great power for the natural immortality of the soul. This letter was afterwards published with four others, in which the line of argument was defended against certain attacks which it had called forth. In these letters the metaphysical arguments for immortality are stated probably as clearly as they ever will be. Their conclusiveness neither here nor elsewhere is made very apparent.

Mr. Joseph Butler, at that time a young man in the Presbyterian seminary at Tewkesbury, entered into a correspondence with Clarke upon his *a priori* argument, in which correspondence he showed the germs of that philosophical genius which has since rendered his name pre-eminent amongst the moralists of the last century.

On joining the Episcopal Church, and becoming preacher at the Rolls, Butler summoned all his energies to arrest the progress of scepticism, by showing that the principles both of morality and religion lay, as it were, embedded in the very core and centre of human nature. In the first three of a course of sermons, which he published in the year 1726, he gave what is still admitted to be one of the most masterly and original analyses ever attempted, of man's moral and social constitution. Drawing out the parallel between man as an individual, and mankind as a whole, he showed, that as the various parts of the natural body evince a mutual dependence upon each other, just so man in society can only exist by means of certain moral relations, originally impressed upon it by God.

The moral nature of mankind he detected with admirable acuteness, under three classes of phenomena. First, there is the principle of benevolence manifesting itself in the *affections*, and holding society together in the strong bands of mutual sympathy. Secondly, there are various passions of our nature, distinct from the principle of benevolence, which go to advance the stability of social life ; and, thirdly, there is the *conscience*, the principle of moral approbation and disapprobation, the great regulative power, which governs, restrains, and directs all the affections and passions, just as the supreme authority in a civil government manages and employs the mere physical forces of the empire.

According to Butler, therefore, human nature, morally considered, consists in a variety of natural instincts, sympathies and propensions, all held together by the superintending authority of conscience ;—a view of things manifestly inconsistent with a sensational philosophy, and containing a decided element of idealism.

To carry the matter still further, the learned prelate went on to embrace the religious as well as the moral constitution of man in his argument, and succeeded in developing the most striking *analogies* between the actual constitution and course of nature, and the truths both of natural and revealed religion. In the sermons, therefore, we have the development of man's moral constitution, as fitted for society in this world ; in the Analogy we have the development



of his spiritual constitution, as fitted for perfection and immortality hereafter; the two together forming, perhaps, the most complete exhibition of human life and destiny, grounded upon philosophical principles, which exist in our own language. We may regard Butler, therefore, as another link in the chain of philosophers, by whom the ideal element has been asserted, and the rationalistic method employed for discovering or supporting truth.\*

So far the idealistic tendency had kept within its proper bounds, contenting itself with reproving the rashness of sensationalism, or controverting whatever dangerous conclusions appeared to arise from it; and had not the followers of Locke attempted to carry their empirical principles to a most vicious extreme, it is probable that no form of extreme idealism would ever have arisen. The rapid advances, however, which were made by the sensationalists, towards overturning the foundations of morality and religion, suggested to Dr. afterwards Bishop Berkeley, that there must be something *radically* wrong in a philosophy which evolved such dangerous and pernicious consequences. But then, where was the error to be found, and in what did it consist? It could not consist, as Berkeley supposed, in Locke's fundamental principle, *that all our knowledge consists in ideas as the immediate objects of consciousness*, since that was a principle which had never been questioned from the time when it was asserted by Plato and Aristotle, to the time when it was put into so clear a light by the great author of the "Essay on the Human Understanding." If, therefore, the lurking error was not to be found in Locke's psychological principles, it was necessary to look for it in his ontology; that is to say, in his method of transition from the inward world of ideas to the outward world of actual and material existence. Here, then, Berkeley considered that he had found the root of the whole evil, which had infected the principles of human belief, and which consisted in nothing less than the false conclusion, that our inward ideas must necessarily imply some objective material existence, which they resemble, and by which they are originated. The position in which Berkeley intrenched himself was this—That, as we cannot possibly get beyond our ideas, these ideas, and nothing else, must be the *real objects* of our knowledge. To the plea, that

\* The complete works of Butler have been edited by Dr. Halifax, and published in one vol. 8vo, with a dissertation upon Butler's views, and an account of his life. Last edition 1845. London: H. Washbourne. Never, perhaps, were the moral principles of Butler in so great estimation as at the present day. The sermons on "Human Nature" have been adopted recently as the text-book of Moral Philosophy in several of our colleges and universities.



all mankind must necessarily believe in material things, he answered that, on the contrary, all mankind believe in the thing which is the immediate object of perception, that is, in the idea, and not in some imaginary substratum, of which we can never have any sensible evidence.\* To confirm this view of the case, he exhibited, with great ability, the indefiniteness which attaches to all such notions as extension, substance, motion, solidity, body, &c.; proved by the very same arguments, that both primary and secondary qualities have no existence distinct from the mind;† exploded all the different hypotheses by which the existence of matter had been vindicated;‡ and concluded at length, that the very *essence* of an object is for it to be perceived by some mind. In one word, he made the synthesis by which attributes are united so as to form real objects, a purely mental one, and thus rendered matter a nonentity.§

In Berkeley's reasoning upon this question, we should not fail to observe, that there are two distinct conclusions he attempts to draw; the one is, the impossibility of our ever finding *a proof* that our sensations are occasioned by objects actually material (since it is as easy for the Deity to produce them in us without such objects as with them); the other conclusion is, that matter cannot possibly exist, without involving the most complete absurdities. In the first of these arguments, the whole of the reasoning is confessedly uncontrovertible: allow the fundamental axiom, that all our knowledge is representative, and the conclusion he draws cannot possibly be avoided. Nay further, in whatever way we attempt to *reason* on the same subject, we shall find that the point reduces itself, in the last analysis, to the higher question respecting the existence of an objective reality apart from ourselves. Berkeley never denied a phenomenal world, he merely rejected its *materiality*: and we may yet find, in the course of the following pages, that, however we may rebut the ideal system, on which the prelate grounded his argument, yet still the material hypothesis of the world, in its ordinary sense, is involved in too many difficulties to render it even *probable*, much less demonstrably true. In the other argument, however, Berkeley is by no means so successful, since he falls into the very same error which he knew so well how to expose in others.

\* The clearest and simplest statement of these views is contained in the three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous. *Vid.* Works in one vol. 1837, pp. 67 and 71.

† Ibid. pp. 47 to 50.

‡ See Second Dialogue.

§ One of the best explications of Berkeleyism is to be found in Blackwood's Magazine for June 1842, where his *Idealism* is defended with great ability.

True it is, we never can *prove* the existence of a material world ; but equally true it is, that can never *prove* its non-existence, or show that such an idea must necessarily involve absurdity ; all we can do is to reduce the question to its several hypotheses, and then accept the one which gives the fullest and most satisfactory account of the phenomena we have to explain.

That all men *practically* do, and must believe in some objective reality, presenting the phenomena of matter, is certain ; to deny this would be only to controvert one fundamental idea by arguments drawn from another ; in other words, to admit that our intellectual nature is in conflict with itself ; so that one primitive dictate of our consciousness being falsified, there could be no shelter from a sweeping scepticism when directed against the rest.

To pursue any lengthened reflections, however, upon Berkeley's idealism—a theory that is so well known, and that has been so thoroughly investigated in the writings of the Scotch metaphysicians—is quite unnecessary ; we only request our readers to mark it as the climax of English polemical idealism, denying, as it does altogether, one of the three fundamental conceptions of the human reason, and standing forth a lasting evidence of the necessity laid upon us to search deeply into the primary elements of our knowledge, lest we should build up our system upon a partial, and consequently a false foundation.\*

From the death of Berkeley down to the present century, the rationalistic method of philosophizing well nigh lay dormant in this country ; or if it did sometimes give some slight symptoms of a revival, they for the most part only appeared in a form too little imposing to carry any weight or attract much attention. Almost the only writer of this school whose works are likely to form a part of our standard philosophy, is Dr. Richard Price. The whole spirit, which this most acute and profound philosopher manifested in his *Ethical Disquisitions*, was decidedly rationalistic ; indeed, so extensive did he make the peculiar province of reason in the whole economy of man, that he considered it possible, not only for all our

\* Another idealist of the same age as Berkeley, whose writings are less known, was Arthur Collier. His work, entitled "*Clavis Universalis, being a Demonstration of the Non-Existence or Impossibility of an External World,*" was rescued from oblivion and re-edited by Dr. Parr ; and has recently been published, with some other articles, in a volume called "*Metaphysical Tracts by English Philosophers of the Eighteenth Century.*" (Lumley, 1837.) Collier appears to have been a solitary thinker, little acquainted with what was passing in the philosophical world. He was acquainted with Malebranche, and probably a personal friend of Norris. But he never quotes Locke, nor seems to have heard that Berkeley, a few years previously, had employed the same arguments with himself, and drawn the same conclusions.

moral feelings, but for all our emotions of every kind, to be ultimately traced to it as their source. In his controversy with Priestley particularly, he showed how strongly he viewed the philosophical aberration of the age, and how earnestly he desired to place moral and metaphysical truth upon its deeper and truer foundation.\*

We ought not either to omit the mention of Mr. James Harris, the learned and accomplished author of one of the most beautiful specimens of metaphysical analysis on the theory of Language, which exist in our language—I mean the work entitled “Hermes.” Many are the passages which might be quoted from this author, in which he not only disavows the doctrines of sensationalism, but points out the very error in which Locke was so deeply involved in many parts of his analysis. Take the following passage as a specimen. “Though sensible objects,” he remarks, “may be the destined *medium* to awaken the dormant energies of the understanding, yet are the energies themselves no more *contained in sense* than the explosion of a cannon in the spark that gave it fire.”†

With these and a few other very slight exceptions, the philosophy of Locke may be considered to have reigned supreme during the whole of the eighteenth century, and to have drawn in its train all the chief metaphysical thinkers (of whom we may cite Abraham Tucker as a fair specimen) to which that age gave origin. Dr. Price died nine years before the commencement of the present century, so that his name brings us almost to the borders of the period, at which the historical sketch allotted to this chapter is to cease, and reminds us that we have to return to the continent of Europe, in order to seek the first elements of that all-embracing idealism, for which Germany has now become celebrated throughout the world

\* Price was a Presbyterian divine (born 1723, and died 1791,) of the highest philosophical abilities. His work against Priestley is entitled “Letters on Materialism and Philosophical Necessity,” (1778.) In his “Review of the Principal Questions in Morals,” the second section of the first chapter is occupied with a general view of the question respecting the origin of our ideas, in which he controverts, with great ability, the doctrine of Locke’s Essay, and shows that “the power which understands, or the faculty within us that discerns truth, and that compares all the objects of thought and judges of them, is *a new spring of ideas*.”—P. 16.

† The first edition of the “Hermes” was published in 1751. A second edition, revised and corrected by the author, appeared in 1765. The antisensational views of the author appear particularly in the third book, and in the notes at the end of the volume.



SECT. III.—*Third Movement—German Idealism.*

We now come to a country in which Idealism may be said to be indigenous, and where it has long borne its maturest fruits. The real source of the German idealism must be sought in the peculiar construction of the German mind; as this, however, is a point into which we have no right at present to enter, what we shall now attempt is simply to show the circumstances, by which this philosophy was first called forth, and to trace its movements up to the nineteenth century.

The great era in the philosophical history of Germany, from which all its subsequent speculations may be said to have flowed, was formed by the life and writings of Leibnitz.\* Although we possess no systematic development of his opinions, (since he was too much mingled up with all the learning of Europe to devote himself closely to the expansion of any one particular branch,) yet it is not difficult to trace in the occasional, and what we may almost term fugitive productions of that vast and all-comprehending mind, the fruitful germs of those philosophical principles, which occupy so prominent a place in the metaphysical speculations of the present age. The mind of Leibnitz was cast in a gigantic mould, and formed by nature to tower above the rest of the world around him. By virtue of this it was, that, like all great minds, he cast his shadow before him, and gave more pregnant suggestions in some of his cursory writings, than most other men could do in the combined and systematic labor of their whole life.

One great advantage which Leibnitz possessed was, that he entered upon the study of philosophy just at the time when he could not only see the ultimate tendency of the Cartesian principles, as shown by Malebranche and Spinoza, but could also compare with them the vigorous efforts which Locke had made in the opposite direction. His mind was thus nurtured and expanded in the very heat of the controversy; and feeling assured as he did that truth and error existed on both sides, he came forward as the mediator between the contending parties, proposing to show, where on either hand mistaken principles had been advocated, and how the controversy might terminate in the discovery of the

\* A handsome edition of all Leibnitz's works, in one volume, has recently appeared in Germany. There is also a Paris edition (1844) of his philosophical writings in two volumes, with an introduction by M. Jacques. From this edition the following quotations are taken.



truth. It will greatly facilitate, therefore, our estimate of this philosophy, if we first of all exhibit the chief points in which Leibnitz differed from Locke on the one hand, and Descartes on the other, and thus define the position which he assumed between them both.

This position may be easily determined. In opposition to the former, Leibnitz wrote a work entitled "*Nouveaux Essais sur l'Entendement Humain*," the chief object of which was, to controvert Locke's view respecting innate ideas, and to prove the existence of a principle of human knowledge, independent of and superior to that which is afforded by the senses. In doing this, he by no means ran into the opposite extreme, which was held by the Cartesians, perceiving as he did most clearly that their doctrine of innate ideas was altogether untenable, and that it had been exploded indeed by the English philosopher; but while he avoided this error on the one side, he succeeded in seizing upon the very point in which Locke on the other side was most vulnerable. There is nothing in the understanding, says Locke, which did not first pass through the senses, according to the old axiom—"nil est in intellectu quod non fuit prius in sensu." True, replies Leibnitz, but there is the *understanding itself*, there is the innate faculty of forming ideas, which was altogether overlooked by Locke in his reasoning, and which stands quite independent of sensation.\* From the one consideration, then, that the understanding itself is innate, though our ideas are not, he goes on to reason, that there are, both in mathematics and in philosophy, necessary truths whose certainty does not spring from experience, but which have their foundation originally in the thinking soul. These truths he regarded as the primary sources or elements of human knowledge; so that his starting-point in philosophy was not, as with Locke, the simple unresolvable product of the sensational faculty, but the simple unresolvable product of the understanding. While Locke, therefore, grounded everything ultimately upon experience, and thus formed a system of empiricism, Leibnitz took as his groundwork the necessary laws of the understanding, and consequently gave rise to a system of philosophical rationalism.†

\* Book II. chap. i.

† The "*Nouveaux Essais*" are written in the form of dialogue, probably after the model of Plato, with whom Leibnitz professes great sympathy at the commencement of the volume. There is first of all an introduction, in which the general distinction between his own views and those of Locke is pointed out. After that the chapters run parallel with Locke's *Essay* throughout, a separate consideration being afforded to each. The principal points of the argument on innate ideas are stated in the first book and the beginning of the second.

Far, however, as the philosophy of Leibnitz differed from that of our great English metaphysician, it stood almost at an equal distance from that of Descartes. It will perhaps be remembered, that the tendency of Cartesianism from the very first was to place in undue prominence the idea of the infinite or absolute, and to cast proportionally into the shade those of finite nature and finite self. Malebranche went so far as to deny secondary causes altogether, thus confining all real activity to the Supreme Being; while Spinoza completely absorbed all finite existence in the infinite, and made everything that is, but a part and a modification of the one unchangeable substance. Leibnitz observing that the inevitable tendency of these principles was entirely to destroy the idea of *Cause*, to banish all activity from the universe of created things, and make all phenomena but modes of the one infinite and unalterable existence, saw that he must go back, and reconsider the very notion of substance itself, if he would discover the source of the error, and successfully counteract it. The great aim of his philosophy, therefore, was to demonstrate, that all substance is necessarily *active*. In this way he thought to vindicate for the notion of causality, which the Cartesians had well nigh lost sight of, its legitimate influence. "The capital error of the Cartesians," he remarks, "is, that they have placed the whole essence of matter in extension and impenetrability, imagining that bodies can be in absolute repose: we shall show that one substance cannot receive from any other the power of acting, but that the whole force is pre-existent in itself." This is in fact the key to the whole of Leibnitz's metaphysics, and from this one doctrine, as we shall see, originates every peculiarity by which his system has been distinguished.\*

As the system of Leibnitz is of importance, not so much, indeed,

\* Leibnitz is to be considered as belonging strictly to the Cartesian school, although he swerved from many of its tenets. His method is fundamentally the very same. Like Descartes, he asserted the inadequacy of all ideas derived from sensation—like him, he advocated a source of truth in the human consciousness—like him, he sought for the criteria of truth in the subjective nature of ideas themselves—like him, he regarded the process of philosophical investigation under the deductive or geometrical form. It was the clear insight which Leibnitz had into the insufficiency of the Cartesian idea of substance, that led to his divergence from that school. Substance being regarded by the Cartesians as a fixed reality, as *the absolute*, philosophy was reduced to a kind of geometrical process, that sought to discover all the possible *modi* it might assume. Leibnitz, warned by the results of Spinozism, reasoned through the rigid idea of extension and impenetrability, up to that of *force*; and by introducing this notion, brought the study of nature to the form of *dynamics*, instead of leaving it in the form of abstract geometry. The clearest statements of Leibnitz's views are to be found in his fragments on "Monadology," on "Nature in Herself," and his "New System of Nature," all of which, with some other letters on the same subject, are in the Paris edition above quoted.

on its own account, as on account of its ulterior results, we shall endeavor to give as clear a view of its principal features as is compatible with the brevity at which, in the whole of this historical sketch, we are aiming. He set out, then, as we have just seen, from the necessary laws of the human understanding, and maintained that all philosophical truth must arise from the analysis of the primary ideas which they involve. To begin with the notions we derive through the senses, would be to base our whole system upon ideas totally confused and inadequate. The only ideas which are adequate to the full expression of the objective reality to which they answer, are the pure *a priori* conceptions of the reason. But, then, how are we to distinguish these ideas from others, and what criteria can we apply, so as to separate the true from the false? The Cartesian criteria, those of clearness and distinctness, he considered to be imperfect, and proposed in their stead the principle of *identity* and *contradiction* as the criterion in necessary matter, and the principle of *sufficient reason* in contingent matter. By the first of these principles we are to test all those ideas which arise from the necessary laws of thought, such as the abstract conceptions of pure mathematics; ideas which, to be false, must contradict our reason itself, and which, to be absolutely true, need only to bear upon them the single stamp of possibility. This principle of identity, continues Leibnitz, can serve for the criterion of *the true* (that is, of what is absolutely and necessarily true), but it cannot lead us to the *actual* or the *real*. To discover what ideas are valid, respecting the world of contingent existence, we must have recourse to the principle of sufficient reason; that is, we must see what has the most perfect adaptation to bring about the best results, and then judge of everything by its *final cause*.\* So far respecting the criteria of truth: next he proceeds to the consideration of things themselves.

Descartes and his school had made matter to consist essentially in *extension*. Now, mere extension would give a world of fixed and unalterable existence; it would be nature reduced to geometrical terms. But this, said Leibnitz is not the true idea of nature. A thousand phenomena are passing around us, a perpetual series of movements and developments take place; and how are we to account for all these? Extension alone does not explain them; there must be some other fundamental attribute of substance, from which these phenomena take their rise. In fact, unless we choose

\* See his "Monadology," p. 397, *et seq.*



to admit that every movement in nature is the *direct* product of the divine mind, we *must* attribute to all Substance an *inherent power*, by which the phenomena of motion are generated.

But, then, where does this inherent power reside? It cannot reside in *masses, as such*, for every essential attribute is independent of all such combinations. Masses are *infinitely* divisible; the limit to which even material substance tends, as far as *extension* is concerned, is *zero*. Every *material* property, strictly so called, vanishes; and we come at last to the simple and immaterial idea of power, as the essential basis of all existence. The simple idea of a force, Leibnitz terms a *monad*; and, consequently, instead of an atomic theory of the universe, we have a system of monadology, based upon the fundamental conception of dynamics.\*

The monad being indivisible, unextended, immaterial, cannot be exposed to any influences from without; being indissoluble, it can never perish. Nevertheless, in all monads changes *do* perpetually take place, of which we are perfectly cognizant, and for which we must assign some sufficient cause. The cause, then, not being external, must be internal: that is, *all monads must contain an inward energy, by virtue of which they develop themselves spontaneously*.

We must not suppose, however, that all these monads are alike; this would imply a contradiction, since no two things can exist, which are in every respect the same, without coinciding with each other, and destroying their respective identity.† Each monad, therefore, has its own inward attributes, according to which its being is developed. Some are in a state of stupor, as those which compose material objects, possessing, it is true, an undeveloped power of perception, but manifesting only what are termed physical qualities; while others are raised to a complete state of apperception or consciousness, forming the souls of men when that consciousness is clear and distinct, but the souls of animals when it is indistinct. God is the absolute, the original monad, from which all the rest have their origin, and the existence of whom we are necessitated by the very laws of our being to admit. These monads, although they have a general connection in the whole economy of the universe, yet have no direct and individual influence upon one another; on the contrary, they all contain within them the means of their own development, and each one in itself

\* See the Opuscula before mentioned, *passim*.

† This is the principle of the identity of indiscernibles, which Leibnitz raised to the dignity of an axiomatic truth. See "Letters to Clarke," p. 432.



is a microcosm comprehending a living image of the whole universe.

This brings us to another doctrine of Leibnitz's philosophy, namely, that of pre-established harmony. The dualism of Descartes was now, by the system of monadology, rendered unnecessary, since mind and matter were reduced to the same essence—the former being represented by conscious, and the latter by unconscious monads. The principle had long been acknowledged by philosophers, that two substances entirely differing from each other, can have no mutual influence whatever. But the monads which compose material objects, differ, *toto genere*, from the higher order of monad, which we term mind. It is clear, therefore, that mind and matter can have no influence upon one another, but each must contain the laws of its own development, and fulfil its own purposes, independently of the other. To explain the ground on which this could take place, Leibnitz had recourse to the original constitution of things as perfected by God himself; who, he maintained, has so harmonised all the monads of which the universe consists, that they shall work in complete unison, and bring out at last the great end for which they were intended. This harmony is pre-established, that is to say, God has concerted it beforehand, and constituted it by a unique decree; all things therefore are pre-formed, and God, who has brought them into existence, has read in them from all eternity the whole series of their movements, their modifications, their actions. In all and in each everything is produced by virtue of their original *nature*, which the will of God from being *possible*, has rendered *actual*. Hence the harmony between all the parts of matter; between the future and the past; between the decrees of God and our foreseen actions; between nature and grace; between the reign of efficient and final causes.\*

From these principles very naturally flowed the system of optimism, which Leibnitz has supported with great ingenuity in his work, entitled "*Théodicée*," and according to which he shows that God has brought into actual being the best possible order of things. Hence, again, his theory of metaphysical evil, as consisting simply in limitation; or physical evil, as the result of this limitation; and of moral evil, as being permitted for the sake of a greater ultimate good. Hence, lastly, his support of the doctrine of philosophical necessity, as being the only kind of liberty which is consistent with the pre-established order of the universe. In the view, therefore,

\* See M. Jaques' Introduction, p. 43.

which Leibnitz took of the innate faculties of the human mind, as opposed to the empiricism of Locke ; in his dynamical theory of matter, making it ultimately homogeneous with spirit ; in his denial of the mutual influence of the soul and the body, thus destroying, to say the least, the necessity of the latter in accounting for our mental phenomena, and in his theory of a universal pre-established harmony ; in all this we see the fruitful seeds of idealism, which only needed to be cast into a congenial soil, to expand into a complete and imposing system. Such a soil Germany afforded, and such a system has now long ceased to be a novelty in the philosophical world.\*

The effect which the writings of Leibnitz produced was felt more or less throughout Europe, but especially in his own country. In Germany he soon numbered many partisans and many opponents, and the disputes which were thus originated upon some of the most fundamental principles of philosophy, (giving, as they did, so great a spur to the cultivation of metaphysical literature,) laid the basis for the future eminence which it there attained. There was one thing, however, which considerably impeded the progress of Leibnitz's philosophy, namely, its want of a clear, logical, and connected form. This deficiency was supplied by Christian Wolf, who, about the commencement of the eighteenth century, came forth as one of his professed disciples.

With but little depth and originality, Wolf possessed a clear methodical mind, considerable power of analysis, and an almost incredible industry, by means of which qualifications he brought the principles of his master, left scattered throughout his miscellaneous writings, into a complete systematic form. The doctrine of monads, however as propounded by Leibnitz, he considerably modified, rejecting altogether the idea, that the lower order of monads have any undeveloped power of perception, and making thus a very decided difference between matter and mind in their real essence. Moreover, instead of viewing the theory of pre-established harmony in its *universal* bearings, he confined it to the mutual influence of the soul and the body ;† but, with the exception of these alterations, he contented himself with methodizing the philosophy of which he professed to be a disciple, by the strict

\* The *Théodicée* is perhaps the most remarkable monument of Leibnitz's genius. It is here that he elucidates the question of the relation between philosophy and faith ; here that he grapples with the great problems respecting the eternal goodness of God, the liberty of man, and the origin of evil. Modern literature, we believe, contains no work in which there is such a remarkable combination of metaphysical genius and universal erudition.

† Tennemann's "Grundriss," p. 425.

application of mathematical forms ; and having done this, he offered to the world for the first time a complete *encyclopædia of philosophical science*.

As the division of Wolf has been much followed, it may be useful to indicate its nature. The whole province of philosophy he divides into two parts, theoretical and practical. The former contains logic, properly so called, and metaphysics ; metaphysics being again subdivided into ontology, psychology, cosmology, and natural theology. The practical side contains—first, ethics, as the foundation of moral distinctions ; next, the law of nature, and thirdly, politics. The philosophy of Wolf, by virtue of its order and completeness, obtained great approval, and found its way into most of the German universities, where, for the former half of the eighteenth century, it held the pre-eminence over all other systems.

Notwithstanding this, however, it possessed inherent faults, and contained the sure seeds of a rapid decay. The errors of the Leibnitzian-Wolfian school are summed up by Tennemann in one comprehensive sentence, which I shall quote, as being the judgment of a man most competent to give it. "These errors consist," he says, "in the fact that Wolf assumed bare thinking as his starting point, overlooked the difference between the formal and the material conditions of thought, considered philosophy as the science of the possible, in so far as it is possible, made the principle of contradiction the highest principle of human knowledge, placed mere ideas and verbal definitions at the very head of all research, made no difference between rational and experimental knowledge, and, though following the geometrical method, neglected to distinguish that which is peculiar to mathematics on the one hand, and philosophy on the other, both in their form and their matter."\* That such a philosophy must necessarily tend to a system of formal dogmatism, is a thing at once self-evident ; it was, in fact, the empty pedantry which as such it assumed, that laid the foundation for its overthrow after half a century's brilliant success.

There were several minor causes that concurred to hasten the downfall of the Wolfian metaphysics. One of the principal of these was the introduction of the philosophy of Locke, chiefly through the influence of the French literati who frequented the court of Frederick the Great—a philosophy which presented a highly favorable contrast to the empty definitions and verbal ab-

\* Tennemann's "Grundriss," p. 425-6.



stractions by which the Wolfian system was characterized. The popularity which was aimed at by these disciples of the English philosopher greatly aided the propagation of their principles, and there arose from the struggles of the two systems a species of *eclecticism*, which, while it hovered between the different schools mingling together often the most discordant elements, favored a shallow and flimsy elegance rather than a scientific depth and accuracy. In the midst of this confusion, *scepticism*, as might be expected, also made its appearance; and the celebrated divine M. de Beausobre, whom we may regard as its best representative, wrote an ingenious work, in which he advocated almost an undisguised Pyrrhonism, and made the Wolfian philosophy an especial object of his attack and ridicule. It was just at this time, while dogmatism, eclecticism, and scepticism were thus mingling all philosophical principles together in confusion, and beginning to render the whole science an object of contempt, that one of the greatest thinkers which any age ever produced came forward, boldly essaying to introduce a new spirit into the degenerate philosophy of his day, and to place upon an entirely new ground the whole method of metaphysical investigation. It is needless to say that I refer to Immanuel Kant, the great author of the "CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY."

In giving an account of the labors of Kant, I have had some difficulty to determine whether I should employ his strange uncouth phraseology, and endeavor to explain it by defining the terms as they occur, or whether I should endeavor to strip the thoughts of their ungainly dress, and present them to the reader in a more simple and intelligible form. The latter mode appears to me, upon the whole, more suited to a brief sketch like the present; and to assist the reader who may wish to pursue his investigations further, I shall indicate parenthetically here and there the Kantian expression for some of the more important ideas.\*

It is a fact worthy of observation, that Kant, although he came from the Leibnitzian-Wolfian school, yet started on the same principle, and with the same object before him, as Locke did. Locke's avowed purpose was to investigate the powers and limits of the human understanding; the purpose of the Critical philosophy, as its name imports, was substantially the very same, that is, to search

\* A translation of the "Kritik reiner Vernunft," tolerably complete, was published in 1838, (London, W. Pickering,) which edition we shall quote in the following pages on Kant. The English reader who wishes to look further into that extraordinary production, will thus be able to follow our remarks, and verify them without difficulty.



into the true origin of our ideas, and to define the proper boundaries of human knowledge. In a word, Kant sought to correct and to complete whatever he considered deficient or mistaken in Locke's previous researches. Both these great men, therefore, on one, and that a fundamental point, thought exactly alike; they thought, namely, that it was worse than useless to set up a determinate or dogmatical system of philosophy, before the mind itself was properly examined, its faculties criticized, its capacities determined, and the possibility of metaphysical science *generally* clearly proved. (This is termed by Kant, *Kritik*; whence the term critical philosophy.)\*

To this course Kant appears to have been incited by the sceptical writings of Hume, which he clearly saw would undermine the whole mass of human knowledge, unless a deeper and sounder foundation were laid for it, than the empiricism of the sensationist school afforded. To lay this foundation was the direct object of the "*Critick of Pure Reason*," (*Kritik reiner Vernunft*), in which Kant's speculative principles are fully developed. The nature of this *Critick* is stated by the author himself as follows:—"Reason is the faculty which furnishes the principles of cognition (knowing) *a priori*. Therefore, pure reason is that which contains the principles of knowing something *absolutely a priori*. An *organon* of pure reason would be a complex of these principles, according to which all pure cognitions *a priori* can be obtained, and really accomplished. The extended application of such an *organon* would furnish a system of pure reason. As this, however, is to demand *very much*, and it is yet uncertain whether in general here an extension of our cognition is possible, and in what cases, we may, therefore, regard a science of the mere investigation of pure reason, its sources and bounds, as the Propædæutic to a system of pure Reason. Such must not be a *doctrine*, but must only be termed a *Critick* of pure Reason, and its utility would, in respect of speculation, really only be negative, serving not for the augmentation, but only for the purifying of our reason, and holding it free from errors."†

What, then, is required (for such is the primary question to be answered) in order to come to a clear understanding respecting the nature and certainty of our knowledge? That we have a *consciousness*, and that thoughts, perceptions, notions (whatever be

\* See "*Critick of Pure Reason*." Introduction, sections 3 and 7.

† *Crit. of Pure Reas.* Introd. sec. 7.

the name by which we choose to designate such phenomena), exist there, it were mere folly and useless verbiage to express a doubt. From these phenomena all our knowledge must be derived, and therefore to inquire into the elements and origin of knowledge, is to inquire into the elements and origin of the facts of our consciousness. Now, let us take any ordinary commonplace fact, such as this:—"That picture was painted by some clever artist."

What, we may ask, is included in such an assertion? First, we have the perception of the particular picture before us; then we have the idea of some clever painter; and, lastly, we attribute the one to the operation of the other. But it is clear that these *particular* ideas rest upon general ones lying beneath them. Why does the picture infallibly suggest an artist—why do we name him clever, and on what ground do we so confidently assert that the picture was painted by him? Clearly because we *must* attribute every effect to a cause, and to a cause that is fully equal to its production. In every proposition, therefore, of this nature, however trite and commonplace it be, there are two elements—a *particular* and a general one. The particular one gives the *matter* of the proposition, the general one gives the *form*; the former is a purely *objective* element, the latter is as purely *subjective*. To distinguish these two elements of experience still further, we may try to assign their respective origin. The former of the two evidently comes from the world *without*; for were the picture not there, the whole proposition would never have originated. The latter element as surely arises from the constitution of the mind itself, when incited to action by the outward stimulus. The one, therefore, may be termed empirical, or *a posteriori*, coming simply *from* experience; the other may be termed rational, or *a priori*, coming it is true *with* experience, but not *from* it.

These, then, being the two elements of knowledge, it is of some importance to find the real test by which they are distinguished from each other. Empirical perceptions are contingent, uncertain, fluctuating,—they *may* be in the mind, or they *may* not. Every fresh scene in which we are placed completely alters the sensations, and the *particular* sensational judgments of which we are conscious. On the contrary, our *a priori* judgments are steady, abiding, unalterable; they appear alike in all men, and are *infallibly* excited by the stimulus of the senses upon the mind. The criteria, then, of these *a priori* conceptions, are *universality* and *necessity*; whatever judgments are formed by *all* men, and formed of *necessity*

under similar circumstances, we regard as arising at once from the subjective laws of the human reason.\*

What we require, therefore, as a first step to real and absolute knowledge, is a science which shall investigate all these fixed phenomena of our consciousness, and by that means seek to determine the value and extent of our *a priori* intuitions. Upon the possibility, and the validity of these, the possibility and value of scientific knowledge must depend. If we can attain no further than to the knowledge of particular and transient phenomena, all philosophy is out of the question; the very first condition of its existence arises from the possession of universal and necessary ideas, and its only safe procedure is to ground our conclusions upon an accurate *critick* of their nature and significancy.† We must see, therefore, how it is that Kant proposes to institute such an investigation.

If we look closely, he tells us, at our *a priori* notions—those which are distinguished, as we said, from mere empirical ones by the double criteria of universality and necessity, we find that they are of two different kinds, originating in two different methods which we possess of framing our judgments. First, a judgment may be simply a declaration of something necessarily belonging to a given notion, as, for example, that every triangle has three sides. (Analytic judgments.) In this case, the predicate is declared of the subject by virtue of an identity in the terms of the question; here to suppose the judgment not true would imply an absolute contradiction, since that judgment is in fact nothing but an analysis of the contents of the notion. But, secondly, a judgment may be a declaration of something which does not *actually* belong to a notion, but which our minds are led by some kind of evidence or other to attribute to it. (Synthetic judgments.) In this case there is no identity between the subject and the predicate, but the latter expresses something respecting the former which, instead of being a mere analysis of its meaning, indicates an actual increase of our knowledge concerning it, on which account such judgments were termed by Kant *amplificatory*, as *adding* something to our former ideas on the question.

These synthetic judgments may be either *a posteriori* or *a priori* ones. Of the former kind are all those which rest upon our actual experience, all those decisions in everyday life which are made in

\* On these distinctions consult Cousin's "Leçons sur la Philosophie de Kant," Leçon iii.

† Crit. of Pure Reas. Introd. sec. 3.



pursuance of the evidence of our senses. If I say "all men are mortal," there is no identity here between the subject and predicate, but I attribute mortality to man because *experience* assures me of the fact being true. It is with synthetic judgments *a priori*, however, that philosophy has chiefly to do, and which consequently require a more particular explanation.

Let us select an instance or two, by way of example. First, take the proposition, Every quality exists in some substance. Here we have a synthetic judgment, because substance expresses something not identical with quality, but it is also *a priori*, because the evidence of it is not empirical but purely rational. Again, to take another instance, when I say that every effect has a cause, I merely attribute to an effect what is implied in its definition, as being the latter of two given events; in fact, I do nothing more than analyze the notion. But when I say that every effect implies the notion of *power*, or that every event has an *efficient* cause, I do more than analyze the expression, I attribute altogether a fresh notion to it, and perform a judgment by which my knowledge is extended. Hume's notion of cause and effect, therefore, is simply an analytic judgment; it expresses only precedence and consequence; the opposed and true notion, which implies power as the connecting link, is a synthetic judgment.

Both analytic and synthetic judgments *a priori* are found in all the pure sciences, and form indeed the very principles upon which such sciences are pursued. The axioms, for instance, which stand at the head of mathematical reasoning are all judgments of one or other of these kinds. Thus, when I say, that "the whole is greater than a part," I merely analyze the expressions, and add nothing to my knowledge beyond what was already contained in them; but when I say, that "if a straight line meeting two other straight lines make the interior angles less than two right angles, those two lines shall meet when produced," I add something to my knowledge beyond the mere definition of the terms; and I feel perfectly sure of the truth, nay, the necessity of the judgment, though it is perhaps impossible to afford any direct demonstration of it. Many other synthetic judgments of this nature might be enumerated, such as the following: God exists,—the laws of nature are constant,—all phenomena imply a subject, &c.; but those which we have adduced, we trust, are enough for illustration.\*

\* On the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments, see Critick of Pure Reas. Introd. secs. 4, 5.



Now the question is, how do we come to such conclusions as these, which we feel to be real and undoubted truth, and which nevertheless rest upon no demonstration whatever? If I am necessitated to admit them as soon as they are presented to me, it must be because the mind is so constituted that it cannot think otherwise; unless indeed we hold the Platonic theory, that we are merely remembering what we had learned in some former life. Here then we get to the real problem that we wish to see solved—how are synthetical judgments *a priori* possible, how do they originate, and what certainty is there in the knowledge which they afford us? This is the fundamental question upon which the very possibility of a true science of metaphysics rests, nay, by which the validity of all our necessary and universal ideas in every science is to be tried.\* Hume referred all these judgments to experience, making our ideas of causation, our confidence in the uniformity of nature, and so forth, merely the effects of habit or association; and by that means he struck at the root of all *necessary* truth. Reid and his school contravened the conclusions of Hume by bringing to their help the principle of “common sense,” and pointing out certain indestructible beliefs, which we must hold, and that too quite independently of any experience whatever. Kant’s object was to look still further into our intellectual being, and to discover the primary laws themselves upon which all these beliefs rest.

In doing this, it struck him, that philosophers had begun at the wrong end in analyzing the human understanding; that they had all begun, namely, by inquiring what are *the objects* of our knowledge, and then had made truth to consist in the conformity between the objective reality and the subjective state. May it not be, thought the great philosopher, that many of those things which we usually attribute to objective reality, are really the effect of our own subjective laws? may it not be that the very qualities which we refer to external objects are infused into them by the mind itself? in brief, may not the forms of thought which logic gives us with such an admirable precision, be the very principles by which the mind is guided in obtaining perceptions of external things, by which it moulds the crude material of the senses into knowledge, and by which it unites together all our perceptive notions into a complete system of experimental truth? If this be really the case, thought Kant, we shall be able to see much farther into the constitution of the human mind than was ever seen before, and lay a

\* Critick of Pure Reas. Introd. sec. 6.

much more solid foundation for the certainty of human knowledge, than had ever been accomplished by any previous philosophy. To solve this problem, then, is the great aim of Kant's united criticism of the sensitive faculty, the understanding, and the reason; and by this solution, he thought to lay a sure basis for the whole superstructure of pure and abstract truth.\*

The *first* thing, then, to be done in this criticism was to determine the proper nature of the sensitive faculty by submitting it to the scrutiny of our reason, to show what there is empirical and what abiding and unchangeable in it as the necessary condition of all perception, and in this way to find out exactly what is contributed by it to the formation of our universal notions. (Transcendental Æsthetic.)† In doing this, Kant took for granted, as a thing lying altogether beyond the region of proof, the reality of our sense-perceptions. The capacity of our being affected by the objects of sense, just as is the case in Locke's philosophy, he never questioned, but considered it as a thing self-evident, that the matter of our notions must be furnished from sensation, inasmuch as our other and higher faculties are simply formal or regulative, and therefore not adapted to supply the *material* for any conception whatever.‡ But then the great point to be investigated was this, — what is it in our perceptions on the one hand that must be attributed simply to experience, or that comes from the thing itself; and what, on the other, that is of a purely *a priori* character originating in the necessary laws of our constitution?

To find this we must apply the criteria of universality and necessity as the true tests of what is *a priori* in its nature; and the result is, that there are just two ideas which are necessarily and universally attached to every perception, namely, *time* and *space*. The moment we experience any perception we must place it in a given time, and in a given space; so that these two fundamental notions are the necessary forms of all sensation, and pre-exist in the soul as the laws or conditions of its very possibility.§ This

\* "Crit. of Pure Reas." preface to the second edition.

† "In Transcendental Æsthetic, we shall first isolate sensibility, so that we separate everything which the understanding by means of its conceptions therein *thinks*, so that nothing but empirical intuition remains. Secondly, we shall further separate from this last, everything which belongs to sensation, so that nothing but pure intuition, and the mere form of phenomena, may remain, which is the only thing that sensibility can furnish *a priori*."—See Crit. of Pure Reas. Trans. Æsth. Part I.

‡ "By means of sensibility, objects are given to us, and it *alone* furnishes us with intuitions."—Trans. Æsth. Part I.

§ In the first and second sections of the "Trans. Æsth." Kant develops his theory of space and time at considerable length, answering objections, and drawing his conclusions from it with great distinctness.

being the case, every quality in an object that implies time and space must also be *a priori* and subjective. Thus magnitude, extension, duration, in a word, all those which have been considered primary qualities of matter, *inasmuch as they are but different modifications of time and space*, are entirely subjective, and are only attributed to objects by virtue of the necessary forms of our own understanding. Abstract, therefore, from the material world, all these, its time-and-space qualities, and the remainder alone is due to experience,—a remainder which includes nothing but the bare fact of their actual existence. The outward world thus stands to us in the same relation as the little objects within a kaleidoscope do to the eye.\* As we turn the instrument round, they assume all kinds of shapes and positions, which positions, however, do not depend upon the objects that are in it, but upon the construction of the glasses by which they are reflected. That there are objects actually present, is a truth that comes at once from those objects themselves, for without their presence the kaleidoscope would offer no phenomena at all to our view; but all the variations of them depend upon the instrument through which they are seen. Now the human understanding, says Kant, is such an instrument; the eye that gazes through it is sensation, and the world of phenomena consists of such objects. The fact that they do really exist comes from themselves, and is known by the direct intuition of the senses; but all the different forms and aspects they assume are produced by our own subjective faculties or laws of thought. Thus the *now* and the *here* of an object form the actual matter of our perceptions as derived from experience, while everything else connected with it, everything that comes under the idea of its *form*, is purely subjective, and derived consequently from ourselves.

The nature of the sensitive faculty is thus fully determined. Its province is to give us phenomena as the bare, unshaped, undetermined matter of our notions, and to fix the two different forms under which that matter shall be viewed, namely, those of time and space; but whether the matter of our notions, as thus perceived, be in the ordinary sense of the term material, or whether it be not, is left by this faculty quite undetermined.† The final conclusion, then, which we are directed to draw from this part of the criticism is, that we can never penetrate beyond phenomena

\* For this striking illustration I am indebted to Chalybäus in his "Entwicklung Speculativer Philosophie," where an admirable lecture is devoted to the philosophy of Kant. See Lect. II.

† Trans. *Æsth.*, sec 2. See Kant's "General Observations" at the close.



into the real essential nature of things, our knowledge of them being relative to the constitution of our own faculties; that, therefore, there is no ontology possible, and, strictly speaking, no metaphysics. Moreover, as to our synthetic judgments, *a priori*, it is evident that they will hold good within the bounds of actual experience, but that they are by no means applicable to those things which cannot be made objects of direct perception; for, were this the case, the sensitive faculty would not be the sole source from whence the *matter* of our knowledge is derived. On these grounds, therefore, we may have a valid science of natural philosophy, because the objects of it are grasped by the senses; and we may also have a valid science of pure mathematics, because all the relations of number and space, about which it is conversant, can be submitted to the direct intuition of sense (*e. g.* by diagrams), as though they were objective realities; but on the very same grounds it is equally impossible to claim objective reality for any purely metaphysical ideas, lying, as they do, entirely beyond the boundaries of all our experience.\*

Such, then, is the contribution which our sensitive faculty brings to the attainment of real and definite knowledge. But, that we may trace the process further, we must proceed to the consideration of a *second* and a higher faculty, that of *understanding*, the faculty to which we have just referred, as giving form and figure to the material furnished by sensation. (Transcendental Analytick.) Sensation alone could never frame *a notion*, inasmuch as it consists only of bare feelings, which are altogether passive, and, as far as knowledge is concerned, are *blind* and *dead*. Were we endowed only with this capacity, our minds would ever be in a chaotic state, with the elements of knowledge all mixed up there in confusion, but not a single thought isolated, shaped, and made the separate object of attention. The office, then, of giving *form* and distinctness to the material afforded by sensation is committed to the understanding.† (*Verstand*.)

Kant was led to the consideration of the necessary forms of our understanding, by the conclusions of *Hume* respecting causation. *Hume* affirmed that our idea of cause and effect is derived simply from experience, and, therefore, cannot be in its nature certain

\* See "Conclusion to Trans. Æsth."

† See Transcendental Logic, paragraph 1. "Intuition and conceptions form the elements of all our knowing; so that neither conceptions without an intuition, in some way corresponding to them, nor intuition without conceptions, could produce cognition."



and invariable. In opposition to this, Kant contended that it was a universal, a necessary, and an *a priori* notion, which could not be derived from experience at all, but must be a fixed relation grounded in the very constitution of our minds, and whether absolutely true or not, must be true *to man* as long as his understanding remains as it is.

Kant perceived, however, that there are other fixed relations in the mind of man besides that of causality; he perceived, for instance, that when we contemplate the phenomena afforded by sensation, the understanding views them according to their *quantity*, their *quality*, their *mode* of existence and so forth, as well as their *causal dependence*; and he considered it of the first importance to discover the actual number of these fixed relations, inasmuch as we might learn by this means what the forms or laws of our understanding really are. If the direct intuition of the sensitive faculty gives us the elements of our knowledge, and we can find *all* the different modes in which the understanding shapes those elements into distinct conceptions, then, it is clear, we shall have before us a complete classification of all our notions, and form a table of categories upon sounder and more correct principles than those on which Aristotle's were founded.\*

Now, to determine these laws, we must observe all the different methods of *judging*, that is, of comparing the relations which exist between a subject and a predicate. To discover these is the direct office of logic, which shows us that there are four different connections capable of subsisting between the subject and predicate in any proposition.† First, the predicate may express something referring to the *quantity* of the subject; secondly, to the *quality*; thirdly, to the *relation*; and fourthly, to the *modality*, or mode of its existence. Each of these four head-categories, again, contains three subordinate ones: for if we consider the quantity of any object, we may regard it as a *unity*, *plurality*, or *totality*. If we consider the quality, we may predicate of it agreement, disagreement, or partial agreement; that is, we may regard it under the ideas of *affirmation*, or *negation*, or *limitation*. If, again, we consider the relations of an object, we may regard its internal relations, its dependence, or its external connection; which give us the categories of *substance*, *causality*, and *reciprocity*, (*Wechselwir-*

\* Transcendental Logic, sec. 3, par. x.

† The process of Logic in determining the different forms of judgment, is regarded by Kant as "*the clue to the discovery of all pure conceptions of the understanding.*"

kung;) or lastly, if we consider its mode of existence, we may predicate of it *possibility*, *actuality*, and *necessity*.\*

These, then, are the laws with which reason has furnished the understanding for framing its notions. As soon as intuition gives us phenomena, this our active and constructive faculty examines them with respect to the four general heads we have mentioned, and requires under each head one out of the three possible answers that might be returned. When this is accomplished, the notion is put into shape; its quantity, quality, relation, and mode of existence are definitely fixed.

We have thus shown the province of the sensitive faculty as affording the *matter* of a notion, and the province of the understanding as affording the *form*; but then we might ask,—How do these two faculties communicate, and how is the understanding justified in applying its subjective laws to objective or sensible phenomena? This is effected by a mediating representation, which has such an affinity to the matter on the one hand, and the form on the other, that by virtue of its intervention the formal notion and the outward phenomenon become united. This mediating representation is *time*, which Kant calls the *schema* of our notions, and by the aid of which we regard the abstract forms of the understanding as having relation to something objective, concrete, and actually present.†

The schema of a notion must be very carefully distinguished from a mere image or conception. Thus, I may have an image or conception of a particular triangle, but the schema of a triangle is the *general type*, to which every triangle is alike referred. The schema of every kind of ball is a *sphere*; that of every possible quantity is *number*: and so in like manner every notion has a mediating representation or type by which the general category is applied to the particular object. The schema, as we just hinted, is the general category viewed in relation to *time*; thus the schema of all things implying quantity is *number*, *i. e.* a representation comprehending the *successive* addition of one to one—a *series* in time. The schemata of quality are reality, (time filled,) negation, (vacuum in time,) and limitation, (the transition from one to the other.) And so also in the other cases; so soon as any abstract category, by the union of the notion of time, is rendered applica-

\* Trans. Logic, sec. ii. par. ix., and sec. iii. par. x. and xi. See also the doctrine of the Kantian categories very clearly stated by Cousin in his "Leçons sur la Phil. de Kant," leçon v.

† Analytick of Principles," chap. i. p. 133.

ble to a diversity of objects, the schema of all the objects, which are referrible to that category, at once becomes apparent. The process of schematizing our notions, Kant shows, is performed by the *imagination*; only instead of forming a conception or image of some actual object, it here only reflects the general procedure, by which the abstract idea of such objects is arrived at.\* The whole process, therefore, by which we form a general notion, is now complete; we have the matter from sensation; the form from the understanding; and then the two are united by the intervention of the mediating schema of time, so as to make the abstract category applicable to the actual phenomena of our sensitive life.

Having thus fully developed the process of the formation of ideas, Kant proceeds to analyze the principles, by which the judgment operates in the attainment of truth. It was before shown that judgments are of two kinds, analytic and synthetic. The principle of all analytic judgments, (which have simply to pronounce upon the identity, or non-identity, of the subject and predicate,) is that of contradiction, as held by Leibnitz.† With regard to synthetic judgments, in which there is an actual increase of our knowledge, the case is different. There are certain principles or laws by which we make an objective use of all the categories, and judge of everything in nature by the light which *they* give us. First, by means of the category of quantity, we regard everything without as under the attribute of extension. That all body is extended, is an *a priori* judgment, which we pronounce as the result of the first category above enumerated. Secondly, from the category of quality arises the judgment that every sensation must have some degree of intensity—that we may regard all phenomena as continuous quantities, each possessing an infinite number of degrees between itself and nothing. This is termed the anticipation (*προληψις*) of experience. The third category (that of relation) gives rise to the “*axioms of relation*,” or analogies of experience; namely,  $\alpha$ . that in all phenomena there is something durable,  $\beta$ . that every event must have a cause, and  $\gamma$ . that all co-existent phenomena must have a community or reciprocity between themselves. Lastly, the category of modality gives rise to the postulates of experience, which are these:  $\alpha$ . That which agrees with the *formal* conditions of experience is *possible*.

\* “Analytick of Principles,” chap. i. p. 135.

† “Analytick of Principles,” First Div. p. 144.



β. That which accords with the *material* conditions of experience is *real*. γ. Whatever is connected with the actual by the general conditions of experience necessarily exists. If the reader will carefully compare these principles with the subdivisions of the four head-categories, he will see how in each instance the *a priori* judgment is connected with and springs from the corresponding *a priori* idea. Never perhaps was there a more profound attempt made at grounding the primary laws of human belief, or, as they are termed by the Scottish School, the principles of common sense, upon the ultimate constitution of the human mind, as reflected in the formal rules of logical thinking.\*

The results of the whole doctrine of the understanding can now be distinctly seen. The judgments which arise from the two former categories are termed by Kant, mathematical judgments; they refer to the abstract relations of space in the forms of extension and of divisibility, and render a pure science of mathematics possible and valid. The two latter categories give rise to what are termed *dynamical* judgments; they refer not to the primary attributes of objects viewed *a priori*, but to the principles of *existence* generally, as given in experience. On these laws reposes the truth of all physical science; nay, as experience is only possible through them, the principles of nature, objectively considered, must absolutely correspond with those of the human mind. The more general results of the whole are these: First, that the truth of a notion does not consist, as Locke affirms, in the conformity of our idea of it with the outward reality, but upon the validity or trustworthiness of our subjective laws. If my conception of an outward object, such as a tree or a mountain, be constructed formally by the subjective principles of my intelligence, then, for the truth of that conception, we must simply appeal to the validity of the principles in question. Secondly, it follows that our real knowledge cannot go beyond the limits of experience, since the understanding is merely a *formal* or constructive faculty, and plunges us into error and confusion the moment we make it the test of any objective reality.† Such is the result of the transcendental logic; we must now proceed to the province of pure reason, and learn what

\* "Analytick of principles," sec. iii. The deduction of the above principles from the categories, is given by Kant at great length, forming one of the most profound chapters in the whole of the "Critick of Pure Reason."

† See Appendix to the "Trans. Logic," in which Kant shows the *Amphiboly*, which arises from changing the experimental use of the understanding for the transcendental.



further conclusions can be drawn from the Transcendental Dialectick.

Pure reason is the highest faculty in man, because it is that which regulates the rest, and which seeks to bring unity and connection into all the results of the understanding. The understanding can only form a *judgment*, but reason can combine two judgments by a middle term, and draw from them a general conclusion. The constant aim of the reasoning faculty is evidently to generalize, and by that means to strive after absolute unity. If I say, man is immortal, I pass a simple *judgment* upon him. But my reason prompts me to ask why this judgment is correct; and to answer such inquiry, it constructs an argument or syllogism of this kind: All spirit is immortal—man is a spirit—therefore man is immortal; in which argument we have grounded our first judgment (that man is mortal), upon a higher and more general principle, the immortality of spirit. This process, if carried on, aims, it is evident, at the final, the absolute, the unconditional, in human knowledge, every fresh generalization leading us nearer to the fundamental unity at which we aim.\*

To find out the forms of our reasoning faculty, we must proceed in the same way as we did with the understanding—that is, we must consult the science of logic, and see in how many ways we may combine our judgments into a conclusion. Now logic points out to us three modes by which this may be accomplished; for we can employ for this purpose the categorical syllogism, the hypothetical, or the disjunctive, all three of which, it will be observed, seek the same end by different methods. In the categorical, we seek to generalize by means of the relation of substance and accident, at each step rejecting some of the accidents, and attaining a more universal subject. In the hypothetical, we generalize by means of the relation of ground and consequence indicated by our always employing the form “if.” And, lastly, in the disjunctive we generalize by the relation of parts and a whole. In the first case we proceed forwards till we arrive at the absolute subject, which is *the soul*; in the second, we seek the absolute union and dependence of every single thing in a whole, that is, *the universe*—the totality of all phenomena; and in the third case, we seek the absolute idea of all possibility, namely, the *all-perfect Being*, who possesses every possible perfection, and excludes every possible negation.†

\* Trans. Dialectick. Introduction, par. ii.

† Trans. Dialectick. Book I. sec. 2.

That which results from the exercise of our understanding, as we have before explained it, Kant calls notions (*Begriffe*), but that which results from the exercise of the reason he terms ideas (*Ideen* or *Noumena*), and it was the clear apprehension of the difference between these two, which Kant considered as one of the greatest services he had rendered to philosophy. Notions are derived primarily from experience; and, as they draw their matter from sensation, can always be traced back to a fundamental reality; they are within the limits of our real perceptive knowledge, and therefore may be ever employed in the construction of a true science. Mathematics, for example, will evidently form a true science, because all the relations of number and space can be schematized and viewed by a direct perception; and physics, too, will form a true science, because the objects of *it* likewise are known perceptively; but the case is altogether different when we pass from the region of notions to that of ideas. Ideas have not their basis in perception—they are the pure creations of the reason; they represent its perpetual struggle after unity, and can never be supposed real without giving rise to perpetual absurdity and contradiction. In fact, the forms and categories of the pure reason are only intended to *regulate* the use of the understanding, and enable it to generalize its judgments; never can they be allowed to make good any kind of objective knowledge whatever.

Notwithstanding this, however, pure reason by virtue of its constitution ever aims at the realization of our supersensual ideas, and strives to make them the signs of actually existing objects, thus giving rise to a science of pure metaphysics under the three corresponding heads of *Psychology*, or the doctrine of the soul; of *Cosmology*, or the doctrine of the universe; and of *Theology*, or the doctrine respecting God.

Kant admits that our reason is so constituted that we cannot but form the idea of a thinking subject, the unity of all subjective phenomena; and hence the force of the Cartesian principle, "Cogito ergo sum." He admits, in like manner, that we *must* ground all external appearances in a real substance, and thus form the conception of the universe. And, finally, he allows that we inevitably trace all conditions of existence up to the supreme condition, the "ens realissimum," and thus attain to the idea of a God. Nay, he affirms that this procedure of the pure reason is so natural and inevitable, that nothing will ever prevent its being perpetually reproduced; but notwithstanding all this, he undertakes to show

that these great ideas, to which the reason ever points, can have only a subjective validity, and that the three corresponding branches of metaphysics, therefore, if they are permitted to stand as vouchers for any objective truth, are pure illusions. The attempt to exhibit and counteract such illusion, is the purport of the "Transcendental Dialectick."\*

To prove that these ideas of pure metaphysics are simply formal, and cannot be used as possessing any objective reality, or be logically deduced, Kant goes into a long discussion, in which he shows the fallacies to which such a use of them always gives rise.

The ordinary conclusions of Psychology on the nature of the soul are these:—1st, that it is a substance; 2dly, that it is simple; 3dly, that it is a unity; 4thly, that it is related to all objects in space. These conclusions Kant shows, by a long process of argumentation, to be purely delusive, (paralogisms of pure reason;) and decides, finally, that the immateriality, immortality, and personality of the soul, can neither be proved nor disproved; that they are objects lying altogether beyond the limits of human reason. Our author next proceeds to the ordinary conclusions of Cosmology. To the argument which proves that the world had a commencement in time, and is limited in space, he shows, that there are other arguments which prove *with equal conclusiveness*, exactly the reverse. All the other conclusions of Cosmology, he shows, are subject to the same contradictions, (antinomies of pure reason,) consequently that the origin and essential nature of the universe can never be demonstrated, the subject lying entirely beyond the reach of our faculties. Lastly, Kant points out the natural procedure of the reason to form a conception of God, (ideal of pure reason,) but maintains at great length, that none of the arguments, whether ontological, cosmological, or physico-theological, by which the being of a God has been affirmed, as *an objective reality*, can ever prove their point, nor any arguments ever prove the contrary.

Hence the criticism of pure reason cuts at the very root of all scepticism on such matters, and shows that these supersensuous ideas, if not demonstrable, nevertheless are most assuredly *possible*; and hence too Kant confirmed his former conclusion, that scientific knowledge is confined to the world of experience, and that the only true metaphysics are those, which have an empirical basis. Such, then, are the rigid conclusions to which Kant ar-

\* Trans. Dialectick, Book i. sec. 3.



rived, concerning the speculative reason of man—conclusions by which he hoped to place every future system of philosophy upon a correct foundation.\*

From the view we have just taken of the pure reason, it is evident, that upon Kant's system its whole procedure is negative. Sensation and understanding combined, *can* introduce us into a world of real objective existence ; but reason in *its* sphere, entirely fails to do so ; its whole office is *formal* or *constructive* ; and the proper discipline of it is entirely occupied in warning us against the delusions we run into, when we imagine ourselves capable of holding direct converse with the noumenal or supersensual world. But now having established these negative conclusions from the Critick of *pure reason*, Kant proceeds to find a positive ground of certainty for supersensual realities in the *practical reason*. Let it be admitted that we have no faculty by which we can communicate objectively with pure being, by which we can know, by direct intuition, the soul—the essence of the universe—and God ; it does not follow that we may not find a subjective ground of belief in these things within our own consciousness. Does then such a ground of belief really exist within us ? Assuredly, Kant replies, it exists in our *moral nature* ; for here the whole question of human destiny, with everything implied in it, finds a meaning and a reality. Ideas, therefore, which in theory cannot hold good, in practice are seen to have a reality, because they are indissolubly related to the laws of human action, and involved in the very principles, by which our moral life is regulated.

To explain this, let it be observed, that the fact of our possessing a moral nature, is one which rests upon the direct evidence of consciousness. We can no more deny the existence of moral ideas and the inward authority of conscience, than we can deny the very categories of our understanding. Reason, in truth, has not only a theoretical, but it has also a practical movement, by which it regulates the conduct of man ; and this it does with such a lofty bearing and such an irresistible authority, that it is impossible for any rational being to deny its dictates. In the language of Kantism, consciousness reveals to us the *autonomy* of the will, and this autonomy expresses itself in an absolute moral law, in a *categorical imperative*.

\* Kant's great work, the "Kritik reiner Vernunft," concludes with a division called Transcendental Methodology. He has there given practical remarks on the discipline of reason—the canon of reason, (proper use of the moral faculties ;) the architectonick of pure reason, (division of the pure sciences,) and the history of pure reason. I only indicate this, in passing, to show the *completeness* of Kant's Survey of the Reason.



Now, what do this moral nature and unconditional command to right action imply? Manifestly they imply *freedom*; for on no other ground is moral action, strictly so termed, possible. Again, they imply the existence of a God, otherwise there were a law without a lawgiver, without an appeal, without a judge. Lastly, they imply a future state as the goal to which all human actions tend, and in which our moral existence shall find its completion.

Theoretical or pure reason showed that these things were *possible*, although it could never attain to their actual existence; but practical reason asserts their reality, not indeed as a demonstrative truth, but as a truth that is implied in the whole constitution and tendency of our moral nature. In this part of his philosophy Kant rendered good service to the true interests of morality; neither can we too much admire the force with which he repels every low, selfish, or utilitarian ground of morality, basing it all upon the categorical imperative—the authoritative voice of the great Lawgiver of the universe, as its everlasting foundation. It is true that all these matters lie beyond the region of actual science; but nevertheless they are within the bounds of a rational faith, (*Vernunftglaube*,) the dictates of which every sound mind will readily admit.

Between the theoretical and the practical movement, however, there is a third division of philosophy, which Kant terms “The Critick of the Judging Faculty,” (*Kritik der Urtheilskraft*.) The judging Faculty is regarded by Kant as the intermediate step between the understanding and the reason; and the results of it are certain feelings of pleasure and displeasure, such as we express under the terms sublime and beautiful, or their reverse. The Critick of this faculty unites that of the theoretical and the practical reason, as it were, in a middle point. Pure reason contemplates *nature*, practical reason contemplates *freedom*, the judging faculty unites the two provinces by viewing nature as a system of means, constructed by the highest reason to bring about certain ends. In this part of his philosophy Kant first analyzes the notions of the sublime and beautiful, and then develops the principle of Teleology or final purposes in nature, as the legitimate offspring of the judgment. The great benefit of this Critick, therefore, arises from its connecting the theoretical philosophy with the practical, from the explanation it offers of those lofty emotions which result from our perception of the design everywhere manifested in organized nature, and the consequent notion which it imparts of a final

end to which the whole universe is tending (Teleologie.) In this way our æsthetic sentiments confirm the belief of the practical reason in immortality and God, and make the real conclusion of the whole system as assertative of the great fundamentals of morality and natural religion, as could possibly be attained to without an actual demonstration.

Let us, then, briefly review the object, which the Kantian philosophy as a whole professedly kept in view, and sum up the steps by which it endeavored to accomplish it. The great question of the school both of Descartes and Locke was this—Does all our knowledge come from experience, or is some of it stamped with an absolute and *a priori* character? Hume assumed the Lockian or empirical hypothesis, and educed from it a system of universal scepticism. On the other hand, Wolf, taught by Leibnitz, assumed the Cartesian hypothesis in a modified form; and by the incessant use of mere logical definitions, as though they could stand in the place of things themselves, gave rise to a system of empty formalism. Kant originally belonged to the Wolfian school; but he so far sympathized with Hume as to feel the absolute necessity of admitting the claims of experience, the very element which the Wolfian school had disregarded.

The question, then, with Kant was this—Cannot the claims of these two schools be adjusted? Admitting the necessity of experience, of what does experience consist? what are the elements of it? does it not itself contain some *a priori* principle? To answer this was the aim of his "Critick," and the answer it returned was decisive. Knowledge, it declared, cannot consist simply in the intimations of sense, for they alone would be *formless*; neither can it consist simply in *a priori* conceptions, for they would be *matterless*; but it consists in a synthesis of both, the one giving the form, the other the matter. What conclusions then flow from this view of the case? Manifestly these—that valid objective knowledge must be confined to the limits of experience; that beyond these limits there may be formal ideas; but no *matter*, no reality; that the universal conceptions which arise from the synthesis of matter and form are absolutely true *to us*; but that we cannot pronounce anything to be absolutely true beyond the limits of our own subjective method of viewing it. Kantism, therefore, instead of denying the whole certainty of human knowledge, as Hume did, merely *limits* it: "If we would go beyond our nature," he says,

"we must be content to rush into darkness ; but within that nature, consciousness is sure and certain."

But a grave question now arises. If we cannot have objective certainty beyond the limits of sense, what becomes of our ideas of substance, of the soul, of God—ideas which all admit to be noumenal or supersensual? "Reason," says Kant, "can never assure us of their existence ; attempt to deduce them, and you fall into endless paralogisms ; as ideas, they exist, but only as ideas, for the senses cannot clothe them with outward reality." Are we then to sit down in the dreary belief that there is no moral law, no spiritual nature, no immortality, no God? Far from it. Reason, it is true, can never vouch for their certainty ; but still it has been shown that our consciousness is veracious ; that what is indestructibly impressed upon it must be true ; and that, although we cannot *demonstrate* the fundamental ideas of ethics and religion, yet, as they are a part of our moral consciousness, they must be accepted as morally certain. They rest, indeed, upon the same ground as does our belief in the categories of our own intelligence, namely, upon the ground of consciousness itself. Although, therefore, we are obliged to say that *scientifically* Kant only admitted the idea of God as a regulative principle, and not as implying an objective reality, yet *morally* he indicated the grounds of natural religion with a power, with which scepticism could not very easily cope. In the practical reason, moral consciousness has an entire authority ; its word must here be taken as law. And to make these conclusions more certain, Kant shows, in the "Critick of the Judging Faculty," that there is a perfect harmony between the moral consciousness of man and the whole purpose and design of the universe.

From the whole of this view it will be seen that Kant, though avoiding the *ultimate* conclusion both of scepticism and pure idealism, yet stood on a narrow point between both. "Kantism," says M. Rémusat, "is not exactly idealism, nor scepticism. His doctrine is eminently a rationalism, with a tendency to idealism, and a risk of scepticism, through the idea of a universal subjectivity. But the idea of a universal subjectivity is not *of itself* exclusive. Universal subjectivity might be true in the sense that everything is subjective, that is to say, that everything is *thought* by us, even the absolutely unknown, under the form of the possible. But from the fact that everything in this sense would be subjective, it does not follow that the subjective is everything ; for in the subjective we find the objective, for example, the non-consciousness



of the origin of experience ; and this is the point which Kant accepts as the starting-point in his philosophy.”\*

The writings of Kant form incomparably the greatest era in modern philosophy, and the results of them have become insensibly incorporated more or less into all our metaphysical thinking. The chief services he rendered to the cause of speculative philosophy are the following. In the analysis of perception, he separated with great clearness the subjective element from the objective, explaining more fully than had ever been done before, the great fundamental distinction existing between the *matter* of our ideas and the *form*. In the analysis of the understanding, he afforded a new, and in many respects, an admirable classification of the logical processes of thought, tracing them all to the ground-principles of our intellectual being, and showing the subjective validity of our primitive judgments. Thirdly, he pointed out the existence of a higher faculty in man, that of pure reason, by means of which we rise from the finite notions which lie within the limits of our experience, to those lofty and supersensual ideas which link us to the infinite and eternal.

But the greatest service which Kant rendered to the interests of truth, was that of silencing, by his practical philosophy, the then current objections of a shallow scepticism against the fundamentals of morality and of natural religion, and placing them both upon a basis altogether beyond the influence of any ordinary argumentation. If we add to this the clear and broad light in which he placed the chief problems of metaphysical inquiry, and the truly scientific spirit he infused into those investigations, we shall become sensible how much all future ages will be indebted to this great thinker for the position he occupied in the history and progress of philosophy.

We must now, however, in few words, show the chief points in which his philosophy is most vulnerable, and thence exhibit the part it took in building up a complete system of idealism. The first objection, which would naturally strike one on first becoming acquainted with the critical philosophy, is the total want of connection between the theoretical and the practical side of it. Conclusions the most important, and most rigid, are adduced by the criticism of the speculative reason, which must all be forgotten the moment we have to do with the *practical*. It is evident that there is here a want of unity, that the ground on which the system rests

\* “ De la Philosophie Allemande,” p. xxii.



is shifted, and that many a mind which had been convinced on the first and scientific ground, might hesitate to receive opposite conclusions that rest upon the second ground, and that not a scientific one at all, but only an undemonstrable belief. Can it be true, that two courses of reasoning, both perfectly legitimate, could possibly conduct us to such different results? It seems, upon reflection, almost inevitable, that there must be some more fundamental law, or fact of consciousness, from which the theoretical and the practical movement equally take their rise, and in the light of which their apparent discrepancies will disappear.

Secondly, there are some unsatisfactory points, which make their appearance in the development of Kant's psychology. First of all, there is no account taken of the power of the will. I am aware that Kant amply repairs this omission in his practical philosophy; but the question is, whether there can possibly be a complete view of the human consciousness, *theoretically considered*, when an element so important as that of the will, with all the ideas resulting from it, is omitted. Then, again, there is something inexplicable in the fact, that certain pure *a priori* ideas are attributed *separately* to the sensitive, the intellectual, and the rational faculty. How can it be said that time and space are simply the *a priori* product of sensitivity, and have nothing to do with the understanding; or, on what grounds can the abstract ideas of the understanding be regarded as having nothing to do with the reason? "The glory of Kant," remarks M. Cousin, "is, that he sought to determine all the *a priori* elements of human knowledge; but in distinguishing, as he does, the pure forms of sensitivity, the conceptions of the understanding, and the ideas of reason, he wrongly separates things which ought to be united, and all referred to one and the same faculty, namely, the faculty of *knowing* in general (intellection); that faculty which transcends experience, renders sensuous knowledge possible, by supplying it with ideas of time and space, and, later still, renders all human knowledge possible, by the aid of the categories and ideas, which develop themselves successively, in proportion as it develops itself."\*

The adoption of a broader principle in accounting for the *a priori* elements of human knowledge, would have gone far to dissipate the delusion of regarding time and space simply as phenomena of our own inward consciousness. In making them purely sub-

\* "Leçons sur la Phil. de Kant," p. 153.

jective, and regarding all the time-and-space qualities of the external world as purely subjective also, he attributed far too much to the inward law, and far too little to the outward fact. When we consider that Kant regarded both the understanding and the reason as simply formal and regulative principles, that he admitted sensation alone as capable of affording any of the *material* of our thoughts, and when we unite with this the extreme attenuation of the objective element even in sensation itself, we at once become conscious how near he treads upon the verge of pure idealism. The younger Fichte remarks, upon this point, somewhat severely, as follows:—"That which belongs to time and space on the one hand, is (according to Kant) bare phenomenon or appearance, behind which the real thing hides itself; neither, on the other hand, have the ideas of the pure reason anything but a negative import; and so this philosophy, both in its lower and higher movement, remains entirely empty of all reality; it is a theory wisely founded indeed, and admirable in its original plan, but on account of one error (that respecting time and space) in the outset, and the logical consequences of it in the execution, it sinks at last into an enormous deficit, and ends in a palpable contradiction."\*

But the weightiest objection against the doctrines of Kant we conceive to be the fact, that he makes reason, with all its conclusions, purely subjective and personal. The categories with him are simply subjective laws, while the supersensual ideas or noumena, which the reason forms, are nought but regulative principles, and can point us to no real existence, inasmuch as we have no right to transport them out of ourselves, and make them signs of objective reality. Truth may, therefore, ever be truth, so long as our minds remain as they are; but as we can never get beyond the bounds of our own subjectivity, we are not at liberty to affirm that any conclusion of our reason is "*per se*" eternally true, or that to us there is such a thing as truth at all, outside the limits of our own direct consciousness. The ground of this delusion (for as such we assuredly regard it) appears to lie in the purely abstract view which Kant endeavored to take of the *a priori* element in human knowledge. Anxious to separate this element from any admixture of empiricism, he views it solely in its connection with the human mind. Phenomenon and essence, matter and form, are regarded as entirely distinct from each other, and the effort of Kantism is to establish the reality of each element in its isolation

\* Ueber Gegensatz, Wendepunkt, and Ziel heutiger Philosophie. Erster Theil, p. 172.

Essential existence, however, never reveals itself *per se*: we cannot realize in a direct consciousness *the bare essence* either of the soul or the world, and consequently Kant is obliged to view them on his principles, simply as subjective forms or laws of our own reason. Had he traced up the actual character of our ideas to their primitive state or origin, it would have become at once apparent, that nothing is given to us originally in the abstract, but always in the concrete; that essential existence reveals itself to us, first *in connection with phenomena*, and that it is only by degrees that we view it abstractedly, as the substratum by which all phenomena are supported.\* In Kant's entire separation of the pure and abstract element of our knowledge from the empirical, we recognize the germ of a principle which tends inevitably to a subjective idealism. The idea of nature, it is true, is not destroyed, but it is contracted to the narrowest possible limits;—the idea of God, or the absolute, is banished altogether from the region of strict philosophy, and made to rest only upon a lower kind of belief; the reason, that emanation from heaven, that portion of eternal truth that is granted by the infinite mind to the finite, is turned into a personal and regulative law, while, on the other hand, the subjective *ME*, if it does not actually create matter, yet gives it all its attributes, includes as part of itself all the categories from which the laws of nature, as perceived by us, originate, and possesses the idea of God, in such a manner as simply to imply an inward principle, not at all as indicating an outward fact. The grand error is the want of faith in reason as the revealer of eternal verities. Admit the non-personality of reason; place it on the same footing as consciousness; mould the Kantian doctrine to this idea, and it would evolve a mass of abstract truth which no scepticism could shake. As it stands, however, it has given occasion to the re-separation of the empirical and *a priori* elements, which it strove to unite into an indissoluble synthesis. In this separation the whole of the modern German idealism has its commencement.†

\* See Cousin's *Leçons*, Lec. 6. and 8.

† Kant's "*Kritik reiner Vernunft*" was translated into Latin soon after its appearance by Born. An excellent translation has more recently been made by M. Tissot into French; and a faithful but somewhat inelegant English translation was published in 1838, (London, W. Pickering.) Abundant materials have been furnished by recent French authors, for the study of the Kantian philosophy, of which the best will be found in M. Willm's "*Histoire de la Philosophie Allemande*," and M. Cousin's "*Leçons*," already referred to. In English, there is a useful manual of the Critical Philosophy, by A. F. M. Willich, published in 1798. The best account, however, hitherto, is that of Mr. Wirgman—"Principles of the Kantian or Transcendental Philosophy." London, 1824



For some few years after the publication of the "Critick of Pure Reason" in 1781, it excited but little attention, owing probably, in a great measure, to the difficulty and the novelty of the verbiage that was employed in it. No sooner, however, did its real merits begin to appear, than it took the most extraordinary hold on the public mind, won its way into all the universities, and made a complete conquest over the various dogmatical and eclectic systems, which had been in vogue before its appearance. This conquest, it may easily be imagined, was not gained without a hard struggle—in fact, never during the history of philosophy, have so many acute thinkers sprung forth *at once* into the field as under the first excitement of the Kantian metaphysics. Many there were, who ranged themselves on the side of Kant, and sought by all means to establish and confirm his main principles; others there were who attacked them, part of whom belonged to the Wolfian school, and part, (as for example, Weisshaupt, Tittel, and Tiedemann,) rather to that of Locke. There arose, also, as usual, from the contest, some bold manifestations on the side of scepticism and mysticism, of which we can at present say nothing, but which will be further noticed in their place.

Whilst, however, this combat was going on, there appeared a few superior thinkers, who sought to perfect the Kantian theory, by supplying its deficiencies, and simplifying its foundation. The most distinguished of these was Carl Leonhard Reinhold, who suggested an idea, which, though it did not meet with immediate approbation, has since become one of the most fruitful germs of philosophical speculation. Perceiving that Kant, in common with Locke, had taken for granted the reality of our inward perceptions or ideas (*Vorstellungen*) as they exist in our own consciousness, and made no inquiry into the scientific ground from which they spring, he fixed his mind upon the one great idea of *the consciousness itself*, and sought to supply what Kant had entirely omitted, a correct theory concerning it.\*

Kant, he conceived, had probed to its very foundation the whole cognitive or knowing faculty of man, but nothing more; what he now sought to add, was a criticism of the representational faculty (*Vorstellungs-vermögen*), and thus to show what is implied in the

\* Reinhold's principal work, "Versuch einer neuen Theorie des menschlichen, Vorstellungs-vermögen," in the clearness and even popularity of its style, presents a striking contrast to the writings of Kant. It consists first of a preface of great interest on the destiny of the Kantian philosophy up to his period. In the first book he points out the necessity of a new research into the representational faculty; in the



process, by which we are enabled to represent ideas to our own inward consciousness. In this process, he contended, we are cognizant of three things—the perceiving mind, the thing perceived, and the perception itself, which goes between them, and exists only as the result of the union of the other two elements. As all our knowledge must consist in ideas, Reinhold proposed by this analysis to lay hold upon the one fundamental principle from which all truth must spring, and in which the theoretical and practical reason of Kant are alike grounded. The appeal which he thus made to our immediate consciousness as the very first and surest ground from which we can start, and the relation which he sought to establish between what is subjective and what is objective in it, though it was all intended to complete the Kantian system, yet gave the first hint at a great principle, which soon showed itself altogether opposed to the critical philosophy, and became the foundation of that peculiar method of metaphysical research, which will hereafter claim much of our attention in considering the more modern idealism of Germany. Reinhold himself, it is true, after a time, gave up his own theory, but he only forsook it to adopt that of Fichte, to whose system, in fact, he had himself not a little contributed.

In closing this sketch of the German idealistic tendency, let us look for a moment at the steps through which it has passed, and at the point to which it has arrived. Leibnitz, the great founder, gave it its first rationalistic direction, and set the example of a bold speculation upon matters, which lie beyond the ordinary range of philosophical investigation. Wolf systematized the different theories which Leibnitz had proposed, and afforded a complete classification of the objects of metaphysical research. Kant next arose from the Leibnitzian-Wolfian school, and laid a new foundation for philosophy, upon the twofold ground of the *pure* and the *practical* reason, making *scientific* knowledge almost entirely subjective. Reinhold next endeavored to unite these two fundamental principles into one, by appealing to the human consciousness as the ultimate basis of both. It needed but one more effort to close the door upon all objective philosophy; to prevent any scientific transition from our own consciousness to the world without; to make *the me* at once the foundation and the author of all our knowledge; and so to complete that superstructure of subjective idealism, which

second, he gives his own theory upon it; and in the third, deduces from that theory the laws of human knowledge.

was already so vigorously commenced. This last step, though it was taken within the limits of the eighteenth century, yet, in all its important results, belongs to the nineteenth, and its consideration must, therefore, be reserved until we come to the philosophical *characteristics* of the present age.

#### SECT. IV.—*Scottish Philosophy.*

After the review we have now taken of the busy scene that was transacted on the soil of Germany during the closing period of the seventeenth, and throughout the whole of the eighteenth centuries, we now return to our own country, where we have to mark the origin and progress of a school of philosophy, which, though by no means imposing in its appearance, or bold in its speculations, has produced valuable results in the department both of metaphysics and morals, and borne the fruits of much sound and healthy thinking. We arrange the philosophy of Scotland, to which we now allude, under the present chapter, not because it ever trod at all closely upon the borders of pure idealism, or is ever likely to do so, (since, indeed, it has been one of its most successful combatants;) but because its tendency has ever been to repress the advancing sensationalism of the followers of Locke, and to point to some ultimate principles or laws of thought, which exist in the mind, altogether distinct from its connection with the material world.

It was Francis Hutcheson (born in Ireland in the year 1694) who had the merit of reviving in Scotland the cultivation of speculative philosophy, after a slumber of many centuries.\* His principles appear, in common with most metaphysical thinkers of his day, to have been originally founded upon the principles of Locke; and he never, indeed, can be said to have departed very widely from it during his whole life. Notwithstanding this, however, he left behind in his writings many sentiments which, when matured and expanded, were certain to stand in direct opposition to the increasing materialism of the school to which he at first professedly belonged.

His first work was an "Enquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue," in which he maintains, that, in addition to

\* Hutcheson's predecessor at Glasgow was Prof. Gershom Carmichael, of whom Sir W. Hamilton remarks—"Carmichael may be regarded on good grounds as the real founder of the Scottish school of philosophy."—Reid's collected writings, p. 30. He is chiefly known as a commentator on Puffendorf.

the five external senses (to which Locke attributes *primarily* the origin of all our ideas,) we possess also certain internal senses, one of which gives rise to the various emotions of beauty and sublimity, introducing us thus into the province of æsthetics, while another gives rise to the moral feelings. This supposition of internal *senses*, although it kept up the language of sensationalism, was evidently equivalent to the adoption of a new, and that an inward source of ideas, and thus formed the first step which was taken by the Scotch philosophy towards a sounder theory of human knowledge. In his metaphysics (*Synopsis Metaphysica Ontologiam et Pneumatologiam continens*) he shows similar signs of a revolt from the authority of Locke, by maintaining the existence of certain metaphysical axioms, which are derived, not from experience, but from the conate power of the understanding (*Menti congenita intelligendi vis*). It is abundantly evident, therefore, that this acute, honest, and elegant writer perceived the existence of certain elements in human thought, that cannot, in any true sense, be termed experimental; and, although he did not reduce his views to a distinct and systematic form, yet he turned the attention of his successors to the weak side of the current philosophy, and struck out the first idea of a better and a more satisfactory system.\*

It was during the early periods of Hutcheson's career, that Scotland gave birth to two minds of a very different order indeed, but both destined to acquire a European reputation, and to exert a very considerable influence upon their age. David Hume was born in the year 1711, and although he is by no means to be classed either with the Scotch or English school of philosophy, yet we just mention his name, in passing, as belonging to this period, inasmuch as the succeeding progress of speculative philosophy in Scotland, as well as in some other countries, was in no small degree owing to his writings.

Leaving, then, with this bare reference, the further consideration of Hume's sceptical principles to the next chapter, we proceed to mention the other author above referred to—I mean Adam Smith,

\* Hutcheson was the son of a Presbyterian minister, and was originally intended for the same profession. His first work (published 1720) on the "Original of Beauty and Virtue," gained him the friendship of Archbishop King, (the author of the work on the "Origin of Evil;") and probably decided his future course. In 1728 he published a second Treatise on the "Nature and Conduct of the Passions," which was followed by his being chosen Prof. of Moral Phil. in Glasgow. His "*Synopsis Metaphysicæ*," and "*Philosophiæ Moralis Institutio*," were written as text-books for the class. His most complete and elaborate work, entitled "*System of Moral Philosophy*," appeared after his death. The views which are therein propounded on the nature of virtue, &c., follow closely those of Shaftesbury. An interesting biography of the author is appended, by Dr. Leechman.

the father of political science, who was born at Kirkaldy, A. D. 1725. The reputation of this celebrated author rests chiefly upon his "Enquiry into the Wealth of Nations," (a department of science with which we have at present nothing to do;) his name, however, has found a lasting place amongst pure philosophical writers from his well-known "Theory of Moral Sentiments."\* Smith may be regarded as the first great investigator of Man's sympathetic affections; for, although it is probable that he hardly found a single mind ready to coincide in his view of the moral sentiments as arising from this source, yet it is pretty certain that there never was an intelligent reader who arose from the perusal of his work without admiring the beauty of the analysis, and being enlightened by many side-views it affords us of the complicated working of the human feelings. It is true we should not attribute to Smith the merit of taking any decisive step in speculative philosophy, or of aiding, by any direct results, its further development; but by the brightness of his genius, the elegance of his mind, and the charm of his style, he gave a very decided spur to the pursuit of philosophy generally, and filled a place in the metaphysical history of his country, which must ever be taken into consideration, if we would estimate the whole progress of that history aright.†

But the coryphæus of the rising school of Scotch metaphysics was Dr. Reid, who was born at Strachan, April 26th, 1710. The philosophy of Reid is too well known in this country to need here any lengthy analysis, and we shall therefore only devote a very few pages, in order to explain the spirit in which it commenced, the principle on which it proceeded, and the results to which we may fairly admit that it has conducted. Notwithstanding all that Dr. Brown has attempted to prove to the contrary,‡ it must be allowed that the state of mental philosophy on the subject of perception up to the time of Reid, was, to say the least, extremely indefinite and confused. That Descartes rejected the ideal system, as propounded by Aristotle, and held by the scholastics, there can be no doubt; but it is equally clear that he did not admit the possibility of our comprehending anything respecting material objects

\* The student who may not wish to follow the development of this celebrated theory through an 8vo volume, is referred to Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Mind, where in lectures 80 and 81 he will find an elegant and lucid statement of the whole subject.

† The whole works of Adam Smith were published at London in 1812, in five vols. 8vo. The first contains his "Theory of Moral Sentiments." The next three vols. contain the "Wealth of Nations;" and the last comprehends his miscellaneous Essays, with an account of his life and writings by Dugald Stewart.

‡ Lectures 25 and 26.



and their qualities, excepting so far as our perceptions, *in some sense or other*, represent those qualities.\* That Locke held the same opinion, we have already proved, since indeed the very foundation principle of his philosophy is, that all things about which the understanding is conversant are *ideas*, and that these ideas are the subjective representatives of objective realities. The use which Berkeley made of this doctrine, it is well known, was to shake our faith in the existence of the material world; and Hume, carrying his scepticism one step further, employed the very same principle to undermine the whole solid fabric of human belief, as will be shown more at large hereafter.

Reid, in his early life, had been a complete believer in this representative theory, and had leaned strongly to Berkeleianism, as the natural result; but when Mr. Hume's "Treatise on Human Nature" came forth to the world, and he saw the consequences to which the whole theory must ultimately tend, he began to inquire within himself whether that theory were really a true one. This inquiry, according to his own account, he carried on perpetually for above forty years, and never could gain any affirmative evidence on the question, except the mere dictum of philosophers.†

The great aim of Reid's philosophy, then, was to investigate the true theory of perception; to controvert the representationalist hypothesis, as held in one sense or another by almost all preceding philosophers; and to stay the progress which scepticism, aided by this hypothesis, was so rapidly making. The course which he follows in order to accomplish this purpose is, first of all to prove that there is no possibility of our tracing the real process of sensation and perception in the human mind at all; that the ideal system of Aristotle is, accordingly, an hypothesis totally unfounded; and that the modification of it which we find in the philosophy of Descartes, Locke, and others, is equally void of proof. That there exists, on the one hand, the mind—the subject which perceives—we are perfectly conscious; and that there exists, on the other hand, the object—the thing which is perceived—we know by a similar testimony; but that there exists any intermediate link or representation by which the two communicate, we have no evi-

\* The doctrine of occasional causes is not opposed, as some assert, (Pros. Rev. No. viii.) to the theory of representationalism. Descartes held *both*; he held that divine power was employed in *giving us* representations of primary qualities. What else can be the meaning of his doctrine, *that whatever we find in our ideas, must be in the external things*? See on this point Reid's *Essays*. Essay II. chap. 4. Also Sir W. Hamilton's *Dissertation* to Reid's works, p. 832.

† Stewart's account of the *Life and Writings* of Reid.

dence, either from the testimony of consciousness, or from any other kind of demonstration. In place, therefore, of attempting to account for the mutual influence of mind and matter upon one another, he points us to certain intuitive and original principles of belief, which it is impossible to doubt without incurring the charge of absurdity. When, for example, we see a house or a tree, we not only have the simple apprehension of a phenomenon by virtue of the *sensation* produced, but we are led, by the very nature of the mind, to form certain judgments respecting it, such as—that an object really exists, that it has a certain form, and is of a given magnitude, &c., judgments which are necessarily implied in, and united to the sensation itself, and which, according to our constitution, we cannot possibly reject. These original and irresistible judgments, he maintains, are a part of the natural furniture of the understanding; they are as certain and immediate as our simple notions themselves, and altogether make up what is called the “*common sense of mankind*.” From this phraseology the philosophy of Reid has been called the philosophy of common sense—a term which he opposes to natural lunacy on the one hand, and to metaphysical lunacy, or pure idealism, on the other.

There are few, perhaps, who would maintain that this phraseology of Reid was chosen with much taste or judgment; and it is by no means to be regretted that the subsequent writers of the same school introduced considerable alterations into its terminology.\*

After laying down these foundations, Reid proceeds to enumerate all the principles of common sense, that is, all our primary beliefs; controverts, by their means, the scepticism of Hume; fixes the proper boundaries of human knowledge; and ends by applying his principles to the analysis of the active powers and the moral feelings. Such is, in brief, the statement (and we believe a correct one) of the object and the main principles of Dr. Reid’s mental philosophy.†

\* The phraseology of the “common sense” philosophy, has been vindicated with great learning by Sir W. Hamilton. He enumerates no less than one hundred and six witnesses, taken moreover from the first names in the history of philosophy, who support either the same terminology, or what is equivalent to it.—Reid’s Writings, Note A. § 6.

† Reid’s first work, entitled “An Enquiry into the Human Mind on the principles of Common Sense,” is generally considered the best in point of style and concentration of ideas. Being written when he was comparatively young, (published in 1761,) it is not regarded as containing the mature view of his philosophy. The reputation of this Treatise raised him to the chair of moral philosophy in Glasgow. His *Essays on the Intellectual Powers* were published in 1785. They contain the same theory of perception and of instinctive beliefs which is found in the former volume, more fully developed, together with an analysis of our other intellectual powers. The essays on the active

Now, in attempting to estimate the merits of Reid as a metaphysician, and the results to which he has given rise, every impartial critic, we consider, must give him credit for the truly philosophical spirit with which he commenced, and the great importance of the object which he had in view. It is difficult for us, who live in a day when the language of mental science has become so much more pure than it formally was, to imagine the confusion of thought that was engendered by the constant use of the Aristotelian and scholastic terms respecting *ideas*, as the sole objects of human knowledge. The proper fixing of all such terms, and of the real meaning we must attach to them, is assuredly not one of the least advantages which Dr. Reid conferred upon the philosophy of his day, and of which we are now reaping the fruits.\*

The great question, however, now to be considered is, whether or not Reid has completely analyzed, and placed upon their true and ultimate basis, the phenomena of perception; and whether he has scientifically established, without the possibility of a doubt, for all future generations, a philosophical passage into the external world. The appeal he makes to common sense, *i. e.* to those principles of belief, upon which we are compelled to act at the peril of being considered madmen, and which the most rigid sceptic, whatever be his theory, is obliged in practice to allow, was unquestionably a most powerful one, and succeeded in driving scepticism from one stronghold to another, however reluctant it might be to yield them.

We doubt, however, whether such an appeal is able to dislodge the enemy from his last and strongest defence. The sceptic, be it observed, is equally ready with ourselves to admit, that *common sense* always takes its stand upon the real existence of an outward object in perception, and that we must all *practically* act upon the belief of it: but what he denies is, that this common sense is *theoretically* to be depended upon, since in some cases, which he is not slow to mention, it appears manifestly to be in error. To this the disciple of Reid can reply, that there is precisely the same authority to be attached to the conclusion of common sense respecting the real existence of the material world, as to any other dictate of the

powers appeared in 1788, and comprehend the range of *moral* philosophy. The great fault of these essays, as containing a psychology, is their defective analysis. Many phenomena are left to stand as primary facts, which can easily be resolved into some general law or principle; but Reid felt that, under the circumstances of the age, he was erring on the safe side.

\* See his Intellectual Powers, Essay II.

human understanding; and that, if we deny that conclusion, we may equally deny every fact of our own consciousness.

Upon this, then, the sceptic betakes himself to his last refuge, and urges, with no little force, that although we must admit the reality of our own personal or subjective ideas, inasmuch as they are a part of our own inward experience, yet it still remains to be proved, that our perceptions, however clear, and our beliefs, however strong they may be *internally*, have reference to any object out of, and distinct from ourselves. The sceptic thus intrenches himself within his own subjectivity, and though closely pressed and circumscribed by the energetic conclusions of common sense, yet sternly refuses to yield this his last point.

Reid deprived himself of the power of answering this final argument, by maintaining that perception is altogether *an act of the mind*; for so long as we admit with him that this is really the case, it remains yet to be shown, how we can possibly avoid the above conclusion in which the sceptic persists. If the mind has power to perceive any object purely by its own act, there is no absurdity in supposing the *possibility* of its producing within itself the same effect, *without* the actual presence or existence of the object. It is true that common sense renders it highly improbable that such should be the case; yet still so long as perception is regarded as a subjective process, and an idea defined to be *the act* of the mind in making itself acquainted with the phenomena of external things, we are unable to point out to the sceptic what he demands—namely, a clear passage from this subjective activity of the mind to the outward and material reality.\*

The position that we must assume, if we would complete what Reid so nobly commenced, is, that the very essence of perception consists in a *felt relation* between mind and matter, that instead of being *wholly* the act of the mind, it is the union of the subjective and the objective, necessarily arising from man's constitution as a being composed of soul and body. If you look to the acts of the will, you feel them to be purely personal or subjective;—if you look to an act of the reason, you feel that it refers simply to abstract truth, which the mind of itself could work out; but if you analyze a perception you at once detect in it another element,

\* Reid's error becomes the more manifest, when we hear him calling perception a notion, a conception, a conclusion, &c.; or when we read of perception being applicable to distant realities, and objects of memory. This is in fact breaking down the very distinction between intellection and intuition, between presentative and representative knowledge, which it was his main object to make good. On this see Sir W. Hamilton's "Reid," Note D.\* sec. iv.



which does not depend upon the *will* or the *reason*, but upon some other existence out of, and distinct from ourselves; so that perception, instead of being an operation of the mind, as Reid regarded it, is, in fact, an *intuitive felt relation* between self and nature, between the me and the not-me. The one of these related terms is, in truth, as much *given* in every act of perception as the other, neither can we abstract either the subject or the object without destroying the very essence of the thing itself.

It is this felt relation which probably suggested, and which for so many centuries kept alive the notion, that there was some link, material or spiritual, by which the objective and the subjective in nature were united; a link which Reid powerfully demonstrated to have no reality, and the supposition of which is rendered altogether unnecessary when we regard perception, as the *relation* which we feel to exist between our own minds and the external world. This, therefore, we consider as the scientific or theoretical form of the doctrine of *immediate* perception, which the Scottish philosopher rested simply on the ground of a practical belief, and denominated a principle of common sense.\*

Against Mr. Hume's attack upon the idea of causality, and his attempt to invalidate the proof thence derived for the existence of God, Reid appears to us to have dealt a more complete and effective blow, than he did against his argument respecting the material world. Hume first assumed *experience* as the sole foundation for our knowledge, and then of course easily demonstrated, that super-

\* To see the principal points of this Critique more fully developed and eloquently stated, the student may consult Cousin's "Cours de la Philosophie Morale," Leçons 7 and 8. Against this view of the case, Dr. Chalmers (North British Rev., Feb. 1847) objects, that in childhood there is *perception*, but no reflex view of self, no *relation* felt between the me and the not-me. The Doctor forgets that it is a part of the doctrine of the spontaneous development of the mind, (a doctrine which he expressly admits, p. 297,) that every element which afterwards enters into our reflective life, was originally at work in the spontaneous. It is very clear that the child has, at first, no *reflective* consciousness of the elements of perception, or indeed of anything else, but this is no argument against those elements being actually *there*. Sunk as he may be in the object, yet the whole process logically implies the subject, which in fact is never for a single moment lost sight of, as the conscious unity, in which all our apperceptions find their synthesis. To suppose the *subject actually lost* in the object, would be to suppose the loss of the sense of personality. The very idea of presentative knowledge, is that of subject and object, standing immediately face to face, without even a *notion* or conception between them.

I have just had the good fortune to consult Sir W. Hamilton's most masterly notes upon this subject, and I cannot see that the view of perception there given, essentially differs from the above, except in its fuller and richer scientific development. He regards the human organism as the great field of perception. And what is the organism? "*A material subject.*" It is just the region in which self and not self, subject and object, mysteriously blend, and by that blending, place themselves in immediate communication. What then is perception, but the expression of that relation,—the attributes of the material, placed consciously side by side with the personality of the spiritual?

sensual ideas, like that of cause, or of the Deity, can have no real basis whatever *in fact*. Reid denied that experience is the only source from which truth can be derived, but pointed out the existence of certain intellectual and *necessary* judgments beyond the bounds of all experience, and proved that the belief in a sufficient cause, wherever we observe an effect, is one of them. It is true he did not probe the whole question of our instructive beliefs to its centre, but, nevertheless, he established their reality on so solid a basis, that the truth which they convey was shown to be as valid as any ordinary evidence could make it. A more subtle analysis of the first principles of human knowledge might certainly have placed these beliefs in a clearer light, and reduced them to a smaller compass; but the only effect of this would have been, to give them a more scientific character than was done by the rough sketch which Reid left behind him, and not to alter materially the drift of his main argument.\*

Whatever objections, therefore, might be brought against the philosophy of common sense, we conceive that they must be for the most part negative. That Reid has done much for the advancement of mental science, is almost universally admitted; to complain that he did not accomplish *more*, or follow out the track which he opened to its furthest results, is perhaps unreasonable; since we ought rather to look for the completion of his labors from the hands of his followers, than demand from himself at once the foundation and the superstructure.

We cannot but regard it, however, as unfortunate, that Reid should have framed his idea of philosophy so completely upon the model of the natural sciences, that he should have determined to confine it almost entirely within the narrow limits of psychology, and attempt little beyond the mere classification and establishment of internal phenomena. The psychological *method*, which he followed, we regard as excellent, nay, as the only true one, since it is absolutely necessary to determine the power and validity of the instrument by which all our knowledge is acquired, before we define what that knowledge is, and to what extent it can reach. But by making philosophy too exclusively the science of internal

\* Kant reproached Reid with mistaking the very difficulty which Hume wished to have alleviated. He supposed that Reid simply took his stand upon *the fact*, that causation is practically admitted by all men, and did nothing towards elucidating the *origin* of the idea. It should not be forgotten, however, that Reid applied the very same tests as Kant himself, those of universality and necessity, by which, to prove the validity of the category, and show it to lie imbosomed in the very centre of our constitution.

facts, by placing it in co-ordination with other distinct branches of human research, by separating it virtually from the rest of our knowledge, instead of placing it at the foundation of it all, he gave rise to that philosophical tendency, which has since virtually excluded many of the most important questions from the investigation of the Scottish metaphysicians. There are links of connection which unite the science of internal phenomena with a far wider field of research. The close intercourse which exists between the human organism and the soul, makes it necessary to take under consideration many physical phenomena as illustrative of the phenomena of consciousness. In the wondrous fact of muscular exertion, we see force and matter, the subject and object, brought into direct co-operation—a co-operation which leads us to conceive and develop the great idea of *power* in its origin and its effects. From this point of observation, we are led into the realms of nature. Power there is *there*, for how else can we conceive of the endless succession of operations, which are going forward around us? Neither is nature a *lifeless* mechanism. Fraught with the great ideas which spiritual contemplation affords, we approach nature as essentially a system of living forces, embodying in its forms and processes the thoughts of a vast and eternal mind. Taking wing from this thought, we soar above the soul and nature alike, to the great centre of all *power*—the great moral exemplar of all *mind*—to God himself. Looking down from that elevation, we again scan the realms of creation with a new light upon them—we see *thought* exhibited in the very lowest organic structure—and trace it becoming more expressive of form and beauty in the plant. In the animal kingdom we see it exhibiting a still more distinct purpose—and at length, in man, giving an image of the very mind from which it sprang. History develops the infinite in man still further; and religion, in its onward progress as a *divine life*, seeks to make its expression more pure and perfect, till in the new creation the divine nature shall shine forth from the very mainspring and energy of the human will. By separating, on the contrary, the realms of human contemplation from each other, they lose their deepest significancy. We look then upon mind as a series of facts, the clue to whose right understanding is lost by their entire isolation from everything else in which the *divine thought* expresses itself. We look upon nature as a wondrous dance of atoms; but, separated from mind, we see not that every beauteous form is the articulate expression of some great idea; yea, and

when we look up beyond the creation to Deity itself, we are chilled by our utter isolation, until we begin to perceive the divine thinking, all within and around, and learn of a truth "that He is not far from every one of us." In this way, then, we would seek to rise into a loftier region of thought, to a kind of "prima philosophia," where the sciences of mind, of matter, and of Deity, all unite in one.

Instead, therefore, of entirely separating the investigation of mental from that of all other phenomena, we should here perceive their mutual relations, and learn to gaze upon the universe both of mind and matter as a whole, the one harmonious production of the Infinite Intelligence. In this view of the case we should contemplate man in his mysterious connection with nature, and nature in its relation to humanity, while the last and crowning problem would be, to show how they both subsist in God. A system embracing this sweep of investigation, might be termed philosophy in its highest sense.\*

Had Reid pointed out this as the ultimate tendency of metaphysical research, we believe that his successors could have built upon such a foundation a noble superstructure of speculative philosophy; but having discouraged this attempt in the outset, his successors have for the most part trodden the path of mere psychological observation, until the science which might soar to the very noblest efforts of the human intellect, and strive to solve the great problems of man, the universe, and their Creator, has dwindled down to one of altogether secondary interest in the hands of some of its more recent advocates.†

The immediate followers of Reid accordingly, true to the sentiments of their master, were chiefly employed in illustrating and defining the principles of common sense as the data of all real philosophy. Beattie's chief merit (independently of his valuable disquisitions on moral and æsthetical subjects) consists in the clear distinction he makes between the axioms of common sense, and the logical deductions of our reason. His whole doctrine of evidence, as grounded on this distinction, contains much that is highly valuable and interesting; but there is no analysis of *pure reason*, no attempt to raise the science of that which *is*, up to the

\* For further remarks on this subject, see chap. v. sec. 1.

† I attribute to this isolation the great practical fruitlessness of the Scottish metaphysics. A work begun so *nobly* by Reid, when he took his stand upon the central principles of human belief, ought to have infused long ere this a new life into all the moral sciences.



higher science of that which *must be*, nor any hint at the very existence of a deeper principle on which the axioms of common sense themselves are all grounded.

In Oswald we see a still more slavish devotee to the same idol, inasmuch as he makes *common sense*, in its most popular acceptance, the supreme judge in all philosophical investigations; while Ferguson at once cuts off the approach to a higher metaphysical science, by laying down as the very principle of all science, that human knowledge is confined entirely to the observation of facts, and the discovery of general laws, as the result of our induction. In doing so, he overlooks altogether the great truth, that there are conceptions by which alone the facts are intelligible, and axioms upon which the very process of induction rests; while in holding up *experience* as marking the limits of our philosophical knowledge, he forgets that there are laws of thought, which are assuredly prior to all experience.

If, then, such *a priori* laws really exist, why, we ask, should there not be one branch of philosophy, whose object is to inquire into them, and not only to point out our primary or necessary beliefs, but to trace them to their origin, as Kant does, in the actual forms of the understanding or the reason? We forbear, however, to pursue our remarks on the Scotch philosophy any further at present, since it has found another, and perhaps an abler expositor in Dugald Stewart, whose works we shall have another opportunity of criticizing, when we come to consider the Scottish school, as it appears upon the stage of the nineteenth century. Any further remarks upon the deficiencies of Scottish metaphysics we shall leave for that occasion.

## CHAPTER III.

### ON THE DIFFERENT FORMS OF SCEPTICISM AND MYSTICISM WHICH HAVE ARISEN OUT OF THE PRECEDING SYSTEMS OF PHILOSOPHY.

IN the former chapters the two chief and opposite methods of philosophizing have been at some length explained, and the history of their principal movements down to the present century briefly related. The observation of outward facts, so strongly encouraged by sensationalism, has been shown well adapted to originate a valid school of physical science, while the habit of reflection upon the inward operations of the mind, which is more commonly nurtured by idealism, has unquestionably produced in its turn many highly interesting and valuable results of another description. Either of these systems, however, when it would embrace the whole sphere of human knowledge, and interdict every idea which has not come through one peculiar channel, soon conducts us to the most false and injurious results.

Let us see this with regard to sensationalism. The whole process of sensation, we are conscious, is passive; the moment, therefore, we attempt, like Condillac, to reduce all our notions to different species of transformed sensations, we virtually deny the natural liberty or energy of the mind, and make humanity itself but an ingenious piece of mechanism, which is moved hither and thither by forces impressed upon it from the outward world. Human freedom accordingly perishes under the hands of a bold sensationalism. Nor is it alone the *moral* nature which is stripped of its grandeur by these principles—the foundations of truth itself are likewise undermined, and the road to scepticism prepared. Knowledge, which comes to us simply through our sensations, can have nothing fixed and absolute about it. Its truth must be relative to the construction of our material organs, and can never attain to a necessary and universal character. In other words, there can be no such thing as truth, which may not at some time prove error; so that the whole framework of our knowledge is rendered insecure.

Idealism, on the contrary, leads us just as far from truth in the other direction. Neglecting the peculiar element which exists in all our perceptions, and by which we are inseparably linked to the material world, it first of all attempts to deduce the notion of matter by a logical process from our purely rational ideas; failing, however, to afford satisfaction by this process, it begins to undermine the validity of the notion itself, and ends at length in its positive denial. Both sensationalism, therefore, and idealism, when exclusively pursued and developed to their furthest results, lead us into a labyrinth of error, from which it appears impossible for any philosophy to extricate us: they both give us the thread by which we may enter into the very centre of the metaphysical maze, but having conducted us there, they snap it asunder, and leave us in perplexity which way to turn, in order to retrace our steps. The consequence infallibly is, that philosophy becomes distrusted, that the conclusions of reason are set at nought, and a boastful scepticism is engendered, which magnifies itself against all science, and builds itself up upon the metaphysical errors which it can deride, but not correct.

We would not, however, assert that *all* scepticism is of this pernicious character; for just in the same manner as we have seen sensationalism and idealism to have a good side as well as a bad, so likewise scepticism, when confined within its proper limits, has its uses, and may be made subservient to the development of truth. All that we desire now to point out is the fact, that philosophical paradoxes, whether they be derived from a shallow or a deep metaphysical system, have a natural tendency to shake our confidence in the power and authority of the human reason, and engender a disposition to regard scepticism as our only safeguard against philosophical conclusions, which we almost instinctively refuse to admit.

The fact, however, that all extremes will at length meet, is strikingly illustrated in the case now before us. The extreme of scepticism is sure to lead into the central regions of mysticism, the most sweeping unbelief into the very worst follies of credulity. The greatest unbeliever is of all men the most credulous; he rejects, perhaps, a thousand truths which rest upon a solid and satisfactory evidence, but then is obliged to accept some crude system of his own, into which none of these truths (to save his consistency) are permitted to enter. The sceptic, for example, who denies the divine origin of Christianity, may often appear, at first sight, rational

in his objections, so long as he is engaged in pulling down the common belief of Christendom; but the moment he is called upon to build up a system of his own, the moment he is required to account for the facts of the case upon some other hypothesis, he soon begins to draw far more largely than his opponents upon the very credulity which he has derided. And not only this, but the more universal the scepticism, the greater must be the credulity by which it is followed; because exactly in proportion to the number of facts which are first rejected, must be the paucity which are left behind on which to construct a new system. From these considerations, therefore, we can easily see how naturally, and almost necessarily, in the march of intellectual philosophy, mysticism springs out of the spirit of scepticism.

The use of scepticism is to check a too ambitious and rapid generalization, to discover all the flaws in the foundations of human science, which might in time endanger the safety of the superstructure; but, having performed this duty, it must cease, and leave the completion of the edifice to other hands. Instead of this, the sceptical philosopher perchance, not content with chastising error (his proper office), proceeds to construct for himself a system of speculative truth: and then what is the result? He has already sported with the authority of the human reason, he has undermined some of its most obvious conclusions; and now that he has placed these beyond the pale of certainty, he must have recourse to any other element by which he can supply the place of that which he has rejected. Such an element he finds in the undefined impulses of our spiritual nature, or the spontaneous working of our mental instincts; and from these, accordingly, he seeks to originate a system of truth, to which he regards the power of reason quite unable to attain, and which is rightly attributed to the workings of *mysticism*. It is the philosophical *sceptic*, therefore, who first shakes the confidence which men had reposed in the authority of their reason; and it is the *mystic* who, to supply its place, introduces that new element of faith or feeling, by one of which his philosophy is always characterized. The ultimate relationship, however, existing between these two movements, will be better seen in the historical sketch to which we now proceed.\*

\* On the manner in which scepticism and mysticism sprung out of the other philosophical extremes, see Cousin's "Histoire de la Philosophie," Leçon iv.



SECT. I.—*Scepticism and Mysticism on the Continent, from the age of Descartes to the commencement of the nineteenth century.*

The two master-minds who gave its first tendencies to the modern philosophy of France, were Gassendi and Descartes. The Gassendists, like Hobbes in our own country, adopted many of the extreme results of sensationalism; while the Cartesians, as we have before seen, leaned with an equal partiality to idealism. In the contests which arose between these two schools, the weak sides of both were alternately held up to view, and the baneful results exhibited, to which either of them, if rigidly followed out, would invariably lead. The juncture then had arrived, at which scepticism was needed to pull down, on either hand, what was weak and unsatisfactory in their respective principles; and accordingly, just at this juncture, scepticism actually made its appearance, to perform the work assigned it in the progress of human knowledge.

Previous, however, to our bringing the chief actors in this scene before our attention, there is one caution which we must strongly impress upon the mind of every reader; that is, not to confound theological with philosophical scepticism. By theological scepticism we mean a rejection of the authority of natural or revealed religion; by philosophical scepticism, we mean a distrust of the validity of the intellectual faculties, and the authority of the human reason. The two may, in a few instances, have been united, as they were in Hume; but in the great majority of instances, the case is far otherwise. Religious scepticism has, in fact, more commonly than not, been found among the disciples of an extreme sensationalism and idealism; the former proceeding more frequently to atheistical, the latter to pantheistical results; while philosophical scepticism, so far from being identified with this, arises frequently from a mistaken zeal for enlarging the authority of religious faith.

With this one observation premised, we now return to consider the different shades of scepticism and mysticism on the continent of Europe, from the period to which we have just alluded, to the opening of the present century.

(A.) FIRST PERIOD—ORIGINATING FROM DESCARTES AND GASSENDI.

The first school of philosophical scepticism in France was precisely of the nature just described. Its disciples were, for the most

part, ecclesiastics, who attempted to save the orthodoxy of the Catholic Church, by impugning the sufficiency of that reason, by the aid of which the philosophers of their day were deducing conclusions anything but consistent with the common belief of Catholic Christianity. One of the most learned of this class was Peter Daniel Huet, Bishop of Avranches, born at Caen, A.D. 1630. In his early youth, Huet had been instructed in the Cartesian philosophy, but finding this unsatisfactory, he went over to the Gassen-dists, in order to see if any of his difficulties could be removed by the tenets of that school. Finding many of their doctrines to be in direct opposition to his religious faith, he became altogether disgusted with speculative reasoning, and sought a refuge in philosophical scepticism.\*

His sceptical opinions may be stated in the two following positions. First, that although there may be, and undoubtedly is, such a thing as objective reality, yet the human reason is too feeble, and has to encounter too many obstacles in the acquisition of knowledge, to be ever absolutely certain, whether our ideas correspond with that reality to any degree of accuracy or not. Secondly, that the only principle by which we can attain to certainty is faith—a principle which lies altogether beyond the reach of scepticism, inasmuch as it arises not from our natural faculties, but from an immediate operation of the Divine mind

The chief work in which Huet's sceptical principles are embodied, is entitled, "An Essay concerning the Weakness of the Human Understanding," which was written about the year 1690,† to follow his "Censura Philosophiæ Cartesianæ." The work is in three books, the first of which is intended to prove, that truth cannot be known with absolute certainty by the help of reason. This position he strengthens by thirteen arguments, in which he makes his appeal to the inspired penmen, to the imperfection of the senses as a means of knowledge, to the insufficiency of the intellectual powers, to the impossibility of verifying the objective validity of our subjective ideas, and finally to the opinion of all the most celebrated philosophers of antiquity. The second book makes us acquainted with the legitimate way of philosophizing, which, he

\* In the preface to his "Essay on the Weakness of the Human Understanding," the author gives a singular but honest account of his own experience in the search for truth. It appears from the memoirs of his own life, that Huet was introduced into the sceptical philosophy by M. Cormisy, who was president of the parliament of Aix in Provence, and was banished to Caen by order of the court.

† The original work I have not seen, but have in my possession an excellent English translation, by Edw. Combe, A.M., published in London, A.D. 1725.

affirms, is only found, when we learn to supply the defects of reason by the principle of faith—a principle which, although it cannot lead to demonstrative certainty, yet gives us an evidence of truth upon which we can fully repose.\* The third book is entirely occupied in answering seven objections which he supposes might be urged against his principles. The whole work gives us a remarkable instance of the union of philosophical scepticism and religious credulity in a man of the most universal attainments and profound understanding.

A far more noted instance, however, of this species of philosophical scepticism, mingled at the same time with a strong infusion of mysticism, presents itself in the writings of Blaise Pascal, whose "Thoughts" will be read as long as reflection and piety continue to go hand in hand through the world.† Few writings of a tendency to depreciate the validity of the human reason can be found, which contain so little that is objectionable, and (with the exception of a degree of unhealthy and morbid melancholy) so much that is valuable and instructive, as these. Pascal's scepticism is all aimed against the *abuses* of philosophy, which appeared to him of so grave a nature, as to wring from him the taunt, which he seemed to adopt almost as a principle, "*Se moquer de la philosophie c'est vraiment philosopher.*"‡ His early life had been devoted to the eager pursuit of mathematical studies; he had there accustomed his mind to look for demonstrative evidence as being alone satisfactory; and when, by some striking events in his life, he was aroused from his absorption in these studies to contemplate the great problems of human existence and destiny, he became manifestly dejected by the discovery, that demonstration must on these questions be altogether dispensed with. He required of philosophy that it should answer all the deep inquiries of the longing spirit with the same decisive voice that he had been accustomed to listen to in the department of the pure sciences; and when he found the voice to come tremblingly and half inaudibly from the inmost soul, he began impatiently to distrust that reason, which failed in giving satisfaction to his hopes and expectations, and to seek a substitute for it in revelation.

\* The whole theory of Huet is summed up in this sentence—"As, then, in matters of faith, faith comes in to the aid of fluctuating reason, so in all other things we know thereby [by reason] it assists to assure and relieve us in our doubts, and reinstate reason in a right it was divested of; that is to say, the cognizance of truth, which it naturally desires."—Book II. chap. ii.

† It is fortunate for the student of Pascal that a new edition of his "Thoughts," un-mutilated by ignorant editors, has just been published under the careful superintendence of M. Faugère.

‡ *Pensées*, Art. x. 36.



The first position which strikes us on reading the "Pensées," is that which asserts the natural feebleness and the many delusions of the human mind. These delusions arise primarily from the inward clashing of the faculties occasioned by sin. "Les deux principes de vérité, la raison et le sens, outre qu'ils manquent souvent de sincérité, s'abusent réciproquement l'un l'autre. Les sens abusent la raison par de fausses apparences ; et cette même piperie, qu'ils lui apportent, ils la reçoivent d'elle à leur tour : elle s'en revanche. Les passions de l'âme troublent les sens, et leur font des impressions fâcheuses ; ils mentent et se trompent à l'envi." Similar sentiments to these occur throughout Part I. Art. 4, 5, 6, 11, and Part II. Art. 1, 6. Another cause of delusion upon which great stress is laid, is the partial view we are obliged to take of all things in relation to the universe at large. Because we cannot know *the whole*, it is urged that we can know *nothing* aright. "Nous sommes sur un milieu vaste, toujours incertains et flottants entre l'ignorance et la connaissance, et si nous pensons aller plus avant, notre objet branle, et échappe à nos prises." Let it not be supposed, however, that Pascal rests satisfied in these sceptical results. Far from it. He felt that man *must believe* something, that it was impossible to repose upon doubt ; and to save himself from the torture of uncertainty, he threw himself, or attempted to do so, into the arms of a faith, which, without satisfying the reason, could yet give repose to the spirit in its longing after the infinite and the eternal.\*

Far, indeed, should we be from denouncing the appeal which Pascal makes, on purely religious questions, from the authority of reason to that of revelation, as altogether incorrect ; for allowing, as we do, such a revelation to exist, an appeal of that nature is in perfect consistency with the best light of reason itself : but it was not necessary, when reason failed to satisfy his heart's yearnings after God and immortality, to undermine its authority on *all moral questions whatever*. In doing so, he doubtless repressed a too bold speculation within the region of theology, but at the same time he tacitly advocated principles, which, if carried out, would have gone far to strike at the root of the fairest portions of human knowledge.†

\* Part II. Art. 2, 6, 7.

† Mr. Hallam, in treating of Pascal, has attempted to undermine the force of his remarks, by denying to human nature an "*intrinsic objective reality*." We cannot but think that on this point Pascal has the advantage over his commentator. Humanity is too closely knit together in the whole of its moral aspects, not to be sensible of perturbations, propagating themselves like waves of evil, through the whole mass.



A similar, but far less profound scepticism than that of Pascal, manifested itself about the same time in Germany. Its importance, however, is not sufficient to detain us, in order to give any particular account of its advocates. One of the principal of these was Jerome Hirnhaim of Prague, the title of whose work, apparently, gives us almost as clear a conception of his philosophy as a perusal of the work itself. It runs as follows:—"De typho generis humani, sive de scientiarum humanarum inani et ventoso tumore, difficultate, labilitate, falsitate, jactantiâ, præsumptione, incommodis et periculis; tractatus brevis, in quo etiam vera sapientia a falsâ discernitur, simplicitas mundo contempta extollitur, idiotis in solatium, doctis in cautelam conscriptus." Tennemann remarks of Hirnhaim, "that he declaimed, not without spirit, against the literary vanity and obscurity of the learned, on the ground that all knowledge was deceptive, and no axiom of reason known, that might not be annihilated by revelation. Divine revelation, supernatural grace, and an inward divine light, he thought, were the only foundations of certain knowledge."\*

The other authors of this period who wrote in the same strain, were such as by no means to require even a mention in describing the historical progress of philosophy; they consist chiefly of Catholic theologians, who attempted thus early to repress the rising spirit of Protestantism, by undermining the authority of reason, to which it appealed.

Whilst the theologians of the age were thus engaged in repressing the bolder flights of the human reason, and advancing, in their zeal, sentiments detrimental to its just authority, another race of sceptical philosophers arose, who rested their arguments upon altogether a different foundation. The men to whom I now allude were educated in the sensational school of Gassendi; and accordingly, instead of invalidating the powers of the human reason in favor of religious faith, they took their start on the road to scepticism from those empirical principles, for which the remodelled Epicureanism of the Gassendist was remarkable. Samuel Sorbière and Simon Foucher both belong to this class, the former of whom published a translation of Sextus Empiricus, with notes and illustrations; while the latter revived the spirit of the new academy,

\* Tennemann's "*Grundriss*," sec. 342. As I have not been able to gain a personal knowledge of the work above quoted, I can only give the current opinion concerning it in the histories of philosophy.

and with its anti-dogmatical principles firmly opposed the views of Descartes and Malebranche.\*

The general character of this school of philosophers was that of profound erudition, great knowledge of history, and a pleasing combination of wit and elegance ; without any claim, however, to deep and patient metaphysical thinking. These qualities appeared, perhaps, in their highest degree, in the works of Peter Bayle, whom, accordingly, we may regard as the most perfect type of the philosophers of this class. The mind of Bayle was formed by nature to move in an orbit of its own, imbued, as he seemed, with an irrepressible desire of doing what no man else would do, of thinking what no man else would think, and of finding out, by the most profound research and unwearied diligence, every paradox that was discoverable in the opinions of others. Accustomed from his early youth to theological strife, and having himself two or three times crossed the boundary between Protestantism and Popery, he settled down into a fixed aversion to all dogmatism, both philosophical and theological, and spent nearly his whole life in exposing it by his learning, and satirizing it by his wit. To assign to Bayle any deep metaphysical acumen, would undoubtedly be incorrect ; but few men ever possessed a more penetrating power of research into the opinions of other thinkers, and a greater talent in discovering their weak points.

This spirit of severe criticism, together with his fondness for the philosophy of Montaigne, naturally superinduced a tendency to examine everything with a sceptical eye, and led him at length to deny the possibility of obtaining any positive philosophical knowledge, that should defy the assaults of sceptical ingenuity. That the human reason was sufficient to detect error, however latent, he firmly believed, and was himself one of the most illustrious proofs of his principle ; but so completely did he seem moulded to the work of criticism and controversy, that after having at one time pointed out the inconsistency of reason with revelation, and at another, the inconsistency of revelation with reason, he seemed to rest at last in the assurance that absolute truth is altogether indiscoverable, and that we must get as near to it as we can by

\* These writers were both pupils of François de la Mothe le Vayer. Foucher wrote a number of minor controversial works, which have little interest beyond their age. His chief opponent was Mersenne, who wrote his work entitled "*La Vérité des Sciences contre les Sceptiques*," chiefly against Foucher's tracts. These tracts were afterwards published together, under the title "*Dissertations sur la Recherche de la Vérité*," Paris, 1693. The best account I have seen of him is in the "*Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques*," now publishing in Paris.

criticizing and correcting the aberrations of those who have sought it.

To get at the real opinions of Bayle, notwithstanding the voluminousness of his writings, is probably impossible. His habit of concealing the authorship of his works by false dates and other tricks equally dishonest, was but the counterpart of the concealment of his real opinions in those works themselves. The general tone, however, that pervades the whole of them, and which betrays the real mind of the writer more than his ostensible opinions, was that which I have indicated—a literary scepticism formed by the incessant habit of criticism upon the opinions of others, and by the utter instability of his own.\*

Such then, in brief, were the principal forms which the sceptical philosophy of that age assumed. It first took its origin from the abuses of the other systems, and performed by no means a useless part, when, in correcting those abuses, it sent back some of the greatest minds of the day (Leibnitz to wit) to examine the very foundations of human knowledge, and to lay them over afresh with greater caution and solidity.

From this brief notice of the early scepticism of the Continent, we must now turn to the *mystical* elements which co-existed with it.

The close connection between scepticism and mysticism has been already shown, and the incipient mystical tendency, as it appeared in some of the philosophers we have just mentioned, has been already detected. We have now, however, to detail the avowed and decided efforts which mysticism put forth to form philosophical systems, and to supply the place of that reason, whose authority was disowned by the sceptics. Such attempts made their appearance almost simultaneously in France and Germany, although in neither country did they produce systems of any superior eminence. Francis Mercurius Van Helmont (born 1619, died 1699,) inherited from his father a strong bias to the mystical. Stimulated by the errors in which the other schools appeared involved, he was induced to make fresh attempts to combine the doctrines of Plato, of the Cabala, and of the Bible, into a new theory, the chief objects of which appeared to be, to refer both mind and matter to one and the same essence, and to reinstate the Pythago-

\* To give a complete account of the writings of Bayle, would be no very easy matter. It is questionable whether the authorship of all was ever acknowledged, or even known. That by which he is best known, and by which his name will survive the lapse of ages to come, is of course the "Dictionnaire Historique et Critique."



rean dogma of transmigration.\* Marcus Marci of Kronland, Johann Engel a Silesian, and a few others, followed somewhat closely in his footsteps; the former of whom, especially, attempted to bring back some of the mystical notions of antiquity, in a work entitled "*Philosophia vetus Restituta*."

In France, Peter Poiret (born 1646, died 1719,) advocated a mystical philosophy, which was less of a physical, and far more of a moral nature. Opposed, on the one hand, to Descartes, to whose philosophy he had for some time been attached, and on the other to the now growing opinions of Locke, against whom he wrote an able treatise,† he sought refuge from the weakness of the reason in *faith*, as the legitimate source of truth, and from the corruption of the will in *grace*, as the source of all true virtue. Theologically there are, perhaps, some things that may be considered valuable in the writings of Poiret; but the extension of his religious notions into the proper boundaries of speculative philosophy, to say nothing of his strong tendency to fanaticism, points him out to us as one of the most decided instances of mysticism in his age and country. Fénelon, who favored that species of religious sentiment which France has designated by the term Quietism, may likewise be numbered among the mystics who arose at this period of French literature. The real tendency of the Quietist system is apt to be lost sight of in the lofty and imposing spiritualism which it professes. The peculiarity of it has always been the absorption of the *will* in passive feeling and ecstasy—a doctrine which may elevate a nature already pure, but which in many is too apt to degenerate into fearful immorality. Fénelon, however, like Poiret and others, is to be reckoned amongst the theological rather than the philosophical phenomena of his age and country.‡

\* Helmolt spent the greater part of his life in going backwards and forwards from Germany to England, and in converse with the mystics of both countries. He published his "*Paradoxical Discourses*" at London in 1685. His chief work, however, is entitled "*Seder Olam, ordo Sæculorum; hoc est historica enarratio doctrinæ philosophicæ per unum, in quo sunt omnia*," (1693.) Tennemann says, "Erlehrte vornehmlich eine allgemeine Sympathie der Dinge; ein Uebergehen des Geistes und Körpers in einander; weil beide nur der Form, nicht dem Wesen nach verschieden sind; und sich wie weibliches, und männliches verhalten, und darum auch in jedem sichtbaren Geschöpfe vorhanden sind."—*Grundriss*, sec. 329.

† *Fides et ratio collatæ ac suo utraque loco redditæ adversus principia J. Lockii*, 1707. The great work of Poiret is entitled "*Economie de la Divine Providence*," (1649.) The origin of Poiret's mysticism appears to have been his acquaintance with the writings of Mad. Bourignon. For a very interesting account of the French mysticism of this age, see "*Foreign Aids to Self-Intelligence*," a series of highly philosophical articles in the *Monthly Magazine*, by J. A. Heraud, Esq. On this subject, see No. 27, (March 1841.)

‡ Many glimpses into the real nature and tendency of Quietism are to be gained from a work, not in other respects very creditable to the author's taste—I mean Michellet's "*Priests, Women, and families*." While the author is far from doing justice to the



But the most wide-spread school of religious mysticism, which arose during the eighteenth century, was that of Emanuel Swedenborg. To give anything approaching to an *adequate* view of the Swedenborgian philosophy, we feel to be a matter of great difficulty, and, indeed, in a brief compass, almost impossible. The difficulty of the case arises partly from the amazing fertility of his writings, partly from the frequent obscurity with which his thoughts are expressed, and partly from the differences of opinion upon many important points, which exist amongst his followers. Although, according to his own testimony, he was accustomed from a child to think much upon spiritual things, yet his earlier manhood seemed to be altogether engrossed in scientific pursuits. The results of these studies exist to the present day in the form of volumes and tracts, which travel over almost the whole surface of natural history and science, and in which it is only justice to say are found, more or less obscurely, many of the germs of recent and brilliant discoveries.

It was in the "Prodromus," a brief treatise upon "The Infinite and the Soul," that the philosophical and theological thinking of Swedenborg began. I say philosophical *and* theological, because it was his firm conviction from the first, that revelation and philosophy were fundamentally identical, that all religion was to be made scientific, and all science to be made religious.

The first question which suggests itself with reference to the Swedenborgian philosophy, is this. What is the method it proposes, by which truth is to be attained? Some philosophers had attempted to *deduce* all truth from *a priori* principles; others had attempted to ascend by an *inductive* process from the particular to the general. What is the methodology that Swedenborg adopted? To answer this question accurately, we should premise, that he set out upon no fixed metaphysical principles whatever; he went to work as a solitary and independent observer, to find truth; and the method to be pursued, formed itself as he proceeded. As any unphilosophical thinker naturally would do, he began his career by a wide observation of facts; his system, therefore, was cradled in simple inductive processes; it was analytic; or if we may use a word implying authority, it was Baconian. Few perhaps who have only listened to vague rumors respecting this philosophy, would imagine that it commenced in a collection of facts, far greater than

virtues of Madame Guyon, and of Fénelon himself, yet the character of the Quietist mysticism is often portrayed by his pen in a very striking manner.

those, of which the father of experimental science himself had any conception.

After passing successively through the regions of mechanics, with the corresponding properties of matter; after traversing the province of chemistry, throwing light upon the action of imponderable agents, and suggesting the germ of the atomic theory, by pointing out the geometrical relations existing between the ultimate atoms, Swedenborg comes at length to the animal kingdom. Here the course of his research begins to gain point and pregnancy. The human body may be regarded as that in which all the operations of nature are concentrated and perfected. Here, therefore, is a microcosm—a perfect representation of all being—an image of the whole creation; here consequently a theatre, upon which philosophy may achieve its noblest conquests. In this department, then, we begin to see more clearly some of the scientific formulas or methods, which, evolved, as he tells us, by intense thought and patient observation, are potent to cast light upon the nature and uses of all things around us. First of all, there is the *doctrine of forms*. Nature, he considered, is purely mechanical in all her movements; hence every higher region in which she appears, from the mineral to the man, is represented by *movement in a particular form*. All the movements of the mineral kingdom are angular, as seen in the crystal; the next form is the circular, as seen in the bodily organization, in the circulation of the blood, &c.; the highest form is the *spiral*, the type of *spirit* itself.\*

In developing the physiology of the human body, another philosophical principle comes clearly into view, namely, the *doctrine of series*. Anxious to know the real structure of the various organs of the human frame, Swedenborg conceived that the doctrine of monads, and of ultimate atoms, would only bring him to a dark unintelligible *point*, in which all form or organization ceased; and that the notion of the infinite divisibility of matter would lead to a nonentity, from which nothing could be drawn. Every organ, then, he conceived, must be made up of perfect atomistic organs, each one of which expresses the thing itself far more completely than the whole; just as society is made up of individual men, and each man is the most perfect pattern of humanity. Everything in nature, therefore, consists of a series of perfectly organized atoms

\* *N.B.*—There are other and higher forms enumerated, which refer to the spiritual world only.

—the lungs, *e. g.* of innumerable microscopic lungs, the heart of numerous smallest hearts, and so forth with all the other organs.

Having gone through the regions of physiology, Swedenborg came to the confines of the province of Spirit itself. Often, he tells us, had he searched for some light upon the nature of the soul, but as often had been disappointed, until at length he got upon the right track, and entered the sacred chamber.\* To gaze upon the soul by the senses was manifestly impossible; but was it not possible to reason up from the material to the immaterial, and from the facts of the one to see into the nature of the other? The validity of such a process was grounded upon the *doctrine of degrees*; a doctrine, he says, which is necessary “to enable us to follow in the steps of nature; since to attempt without it to approach and visit her in her sublime abode, would be to attempt to climb heaven by the Tower of Babel; for the highest step must be approached by the intermediate.”† The doctrine of degrees, accordingly, is that which teaches us, that there is a relation or parallelism between all things in nature, from the lowest sphere in which it exists, to the highest. Thus the brain contains *potentially* the whole body, and what is essentially true of the body, is true of it. Again, the animal spirits which flow through the nerves, in a higher and more ethereal sphere, perfectly represent the more gross and obdurate human organization; so also the soul itself, in a still higher region, must be a perfect type, or rather co-ordinate archetype, of the body. Accordingly, all nature by these degrees ascends from the lowest to the highest, and descends from the highest to the lowest; so that by the aid of this philosophical formula, we can study the spiritual world by means of the knowledge we possess of the material.‡

Even in the spirit itself there are *degrees*. The lowest is that which is only cognizant of sensations; the next above this is the *animus*, whose office is to imagine and desire; thirdly, there is the *mind*, which understands and wills; and lastly, there is the *soul*, whose office is to represent the universe, and have intuition of ends.§ Such is man, so far as the *form* of his being is concerned; but where is the *life*, which is to animate him? The body is dead matter, but it is vivified by the animal spirits and other impondera-

\* See his “Economy of the Animal Kingdom,” chap. iii., on the Soul; at the commencement of which we have his own account of the method he had pursued.

† Ibid., chap. iii. sec. 210.

‡ This is an application of the doctrine of Correspondences.

§ Economy of Animal Kingdom, chap. iii. sec. 6.

ble agents ; these agents again are vivified by the *soul*—but whence the life of the soul? *It is the love of God.\** God, according to Swedenborg, is *perfect man*. The essence and form of God are respectively perfect love and perfect wisdom ; the former is represented in the human will, the latter in the human understanding.

Having thus traced the philosophy of Swedenborg to its highest point, we may look back for a moment upon his whole method of procedure. Evidently it is the inductive and synthetic method combined. Commencing by observation, his mind seized upon certain high philosophical axioms, and from them reasoned downwards to the nature and uses of particular objects. Perhaps it is the only attempt the world has seen (with exception of the unsuccessful effort of Comte) at rising upwards to purely philosophical ideas from positive and concrete facts.

Having attained thus to the highest region of philosophy, Swedenborg enters the world of *theological* truth. For gazing upon the spiritual world, he conceives we have purely spiritual senses, and a spiritual understanding. To most men the spiritual world is closed, because, absorbed in the lower or sensual life, they have no intuition of it. To many, moreover, who *do* obtain spiritual intuitions, there exists not an enlightened spiritual understanding to *interpret* what the inward eye beholds. Spiritual or theological truth only becomes clear where both these requisites unite ; where the purely moralized or sensualized soul gazes upon the higher world, and where the spiritual understanding can comprehend what is seen.

Wrapt in his own deep reveries, Swedenborg could not resist the idea, that God, by a special act of his providence, had brought the scenery of the spiritual world, and the relations of spiritual truth, before his own mental vision, and within the sphere of his intellection. With a mind fraught with long study upon nature and her works—with a soul habituated to deep meditation upon spiritual things—with a vivid imagination that could trace the analogies of higher truth in the dark windings of material forms—with a moral nature purified to virtue, and an exquisite sensibility of the whole system, he lost himself in the visions of his own inmost soul. Sometimes he seemed transported out of the body—then anon he would wake up to the world around him ; sometimes he pursued his high imaginings, unconscious of the lapse of time ; and then he wrote down that he had seen a vision of angels ; and

\* *Angelic Wisdom*, part i.



thus the high truth, that man, when his nature is elevated, can converse with the spiritual world through the medium of religious faith, became transformed into a special revelation, that was to usher in the purified Church, and the latter-day glory. Swedenborg was assuredly a great intellectual phenomenon. Seldom, perhaps never, have so many systems concentrated in a single mind. He began a simple observer—a Baconian analyst; from that he raised himself to the region of rational and ideal truth; and ended a mystic—the favored channel of a new dispensation to mankind. In him, sensationalism, idealism, mysticism, were united—the only phase through which he never passed was that of scepticism. Had he been fortunate enough to complete the cycle, had a tinge of wholesome scepticism curbed his credulity, we might have had a great philosopher, and an active Christian reformer, unmarred by the enthusiasm that dared to claim the title and the honors of a divine and apostolic messenger.\*

These phenomena, then, which we have just enumerated, may be viewed as the various waves of scepticism and mysticism, which, having been first raised by the storms of controversy, in which the idealism of Descartes and the sensationalism of Gassendi were so long engaged, propagated themselves in different degrees of intensity for many years over several parts of the Continent of Europe. In the meantime the phases of idealistic and sensational philosophy themselves had altogether changed. The philosophy of Descartes had passed through the hands of Malebranche and Spinoza, had been remodelled by Leibnitz, and had come forth in a new dogmatic form under the auspices of Wolf. That of Gassendi, on the other hand, had given place to the more profound, and, at the same time, more popular sensationalism of Locke and his expounder Condillac; so that the effects of the old Cartesian controversy had hardly expended themselves, before the fresh struggles of these *remodelled* systems were throwing in the seeds of a new scepticism and a new mysticism, which were to bear their fruits during the greater part of the eighteenth century. This leads us to—

\* One of the best expositions of the Swedenborgian philosophy is given in the "Foreign Aids to Self-reflection," by J. A. Heraud, Esq. (Monthly Mag. No. 29.) The Swedenborgian Society is now in course of translating and publishing his works complete. The "Principia," the "Economy of the Animal Kingdom," with an admirable introduction by J. J. G. Wilkinson, Esq., and the "Animal Kingdom," have already appeared, others are forthcoming.

## (B.) THE SECOND PERIOD—ORIGINATING FROM LOCKE AND LEIBNITZ.

The scepticism and mysticism of the *eighteenth* century, to which we now advert, showed many points of diversity from that which preceded it. In France almost all traces of both gradually died away, for the whole mind of the country became now too much absorbed in the rising school of materialism, and its devotion to physical science, to give rise to much literature of a philosophical kind beyond these limits. Germany, on the contrary, in which the Leibnitzian-Wolfian philosophy was swaying a very feeble sceptre, gave a far better opportunity for the growth of sceptical principles, aided on, as they were, by the able and acute advocacy, which they had received in this country from the versatile pen of Hume. The court of Frederick the Great, who welcomed men of any opinions, so long as they had somewhat of the French taste and refinement about them, was surrounded by a multitude of *savans*, many of whom took a malignant pride in deprecating all the philosophical as well as religious notions of their day, in favor of a shallow and fashionable scepticism.

Among these the Marquis d'Argens figured as the author of a work, by no means deficient in erudition, entitled, "The Philosophy of Good Sense," the object of which was to throw doubts, not only upon the conclusions of logic and metaphysics, but upon those of history, and even natural philosophy and astronomy itself.\* A still more direct attempt at philosophical scepticism was made by M. De Beausobre, who, in a work entitled "Pyrrhonisme Raisonnable," advocated a system but few removes from that of the philosopher whose name he adopted, and which contained many attacks upon almost all the dogmatical systems of philosophy, from Aristotle down to Wolf.† The same tendency was exhibited in Platner's "Aphorisms," a work of great metaphysical ability, which appeared first in 1776. Another edition of this work, considerably modified, was published after the appearance of the "Critick of Pure Reason," together with a "Manual of Logic and Metaphysics." In these works he attacked the con-

\* The Marquis d'Argens was remarkable for the adventurous character of his life. He was brought up for a soldier; went in the embassy to Turkey; visited the principal parts of Africa; was wounded in Germany; and, being disinherited by his father, found a home in the court of Frederick. His writings are all marked with scepticism, more especially aimed against Christianity.

† Louis de Beausobre, the son of Isaac de Beausobre, was born in Berlin. His writings are not esteemed for great originality.

clusions of the Kantian philosophy, and attempted to overwhelm its positive results, by reproducing the old arguments of Pyrrhonism against the objective validity of human knowledge.\* Several other sceptical productions were put forth at that period, which, however, are but little known in this country, and which, even in Germany itself, have been long lost sight of, eclipsed by the brighter lights which have since arisen in their philosophical hemisphere.

These, we believe, were the most prominent *sceptical* writings which made their appearance during this age. As to mysticism—mysticism of a direct nature made but little fresh effort during the middle of the eighteenth century; the study of Swedenborg, perhaps, affording an indirect outlet for many notions of a mystical character, which might otherwise have presented some peculiar features of their own. It was, however, in the latter part of this century, that St. Martin translated the works of Jacob Boehme, and originated the doctrine of religious mysticism in France, for which he is famous. Any one who wishes to understand the foundation upon which St. Martin built most of his peculiar notions, has, in order to appreciate it aright, only to peruse the writings of Henry More, one of the Cambridge Platonists, and then imagine the principles there advocated reared up under the guidance of a versatile and enthusiastic spirit, as a barrier against the philosophical sensationalism of Condillac and the religious scepticism of Voltaire. St. Martin was in many respects very similar to that mystical, but still admirable writer; and the opinions prevalent in France, when he gave utterance to his thoughts, were such as to rouse his whole soul to action, in the attempt to place his own lofty spiritualism in direct opposition to them.

To give some idea of the method of philosophizing, which is found in the writings of the "unknown philosopher," as he was often termed, I will give a single passage translated from an article in the "Archives Littéraires," which appeared in 1804, just after his death, and quoted by M. Damiron, in which the spirit of his system is ably delineated. "The system of St. Martin aims at explaining everything by means of *man*. Man is to him the key to every phenomenon, and the image of all truth. Taking, therefore, literally the famous oracle of Delphi, 'nosce te ipsum,' he maintains that, if we would fall into no mistakes respecting exist-

\* Platner is perhaps better known by his "Anthropology," than his strictly metaphysical writings. No man of his day, probably, combined a greater knowledge of physiology and philosophy together.



ence, and the harmony of all beings in the universe, we have only to understand *ourselves*, inasmuch as the body of man has a necessary relation to everything visible, and his spirit is the type of everything that is invisible. What we should study, then, are the physical faculties that depend upon our bodily organization, the intellectual faculties, whose exercise is often influenced by the senses and exterior objects, and the moral faculties or the conscience, which supposes free will. It is in this study that we must seek for truth, and we shall find in ourselves all the necessary means of arriving at it: this it is which our author calls natural revelation. For example: "The smallest attention," he says, "suffices to assure us that we neither communicate nor form any idea without its being preceded by a picture or image of it, engendered by our understanding; in this way it is, that we originate the plan of a building, or any other work. Our creative faculty is vast, active, inexhaustible; but in examining it closely, we see that it is only secondary, temporary, dependent; that is to say, that it owes its origin to a creative faculty, which is superior, independent, and universal, of which ours is but a feeble copy. Man, therefore, is a type, which must have a prototype, and that prototype is God."

From this extract the reader may form some idea of the philosophical mysticism by which St. Martin attempted to supplant the shallow materialism and growing infidelity of his age, and to induce his countrymen to take a deeper insight into the constitution of the human mind, and its close connection with the Divine.\*

(C.) THIRD PERIOD—ORIGINATING WITH KANT AND CONDILLAC.

The writings of Kant and Condillac formed a new era in the progress both of sensationalism and of idealism. As their respective systems became propagated, the minor efforts of the philosophical spirit—its sceptical as well as its mystical tendencies—gradually disappeared. The former expired under the gigantic power of the one, the latter was dissipated by the clear and lucid analysis of the other. France and Germany now seemed to be equally divided between the material school of Paris, and the

\* The Marquis Louis Claude de St. Martin, called the Unknown Philosopher, was born at Amboise 1743, and died 1803. His life was one of great literary activity, and his writings are all marked by a lofty but somewhat mystical spiritualism. His two principal works are, "*Erreurs de la Vérité, ou les Hommes rappelés au Principe universel de la Science*," (1775,) and "*De l'Esprit des Choses, ou Coup-de'Œil Philosophique sur la nature des êtres, et sur l'objet de leur existence:—Ouvrage dans lequel on considère l'Homme, comme étant le mot de toutes les énigmes*," (2 vols. 8vo. 1800.)



idealistic school of Königsberg; and in our present sketch we have to pause for a time, silent spectators of this conflict, until we see scepticism and mysticism again appearing between the combatants, anew to chastise their too great temerity, and anew to send them back to a closer examination of the fundamental principles upon which they were respectively building. Accordingly, ere the century comes to a close, we see the indications of a new system, both of sceptical and mystical philosophy, emanating from the Kantian metaphysics; the former brought forward by Schulze, the latter by Jacobi. As both of these writers, however, though belonging actually to the eighteenth century, yet pertain, as far as their influence goes, more closely to the nineteenth, we shall hereafter take them up as an introduction to the sceptical and mystical philosophy of Germany during the present age. We now come back to our own country.

SECT. II.—*Scepticism and Mysticism in England, from the time of Bacon to the commencement of the nineteenth century.*

A struggle, similar to that which we have described between the Cartesians and Gassendists in France, was carried on at the very same period in England, between the disciples and the opponents of Hobbism. The idealistic tendency, however, was far less extravagant in our own country than it became on the Continent, in the hands of Malebranche and Spinoza; and the scepticism which arose from its paradoxes was proportionably of a less sweeping character. The author, who in England most perfectly expressed the sceptical tendency of this age, was Joseph Glanville, court-preacher to King Charles the Second, whose work, entitled "*Scepsis Scientifica, or Confessed Ignorance the Way to Science, in an Essay of the Vanity of dogmatizing and confident Opinion,*" was intended rather to controvert the pretensions of the Aristotelian and the Cartesian philosophy, than to involve the whole circumference of human knowledge in darkness and uncertainty.

Strictly speaking, therefore, Glanville, although he appropriates the term *Scepsis* as significant of his philosophical opinions, was far from being a universal sceptic. His object was to inculcate modesty, to chastise dogmatism, to teach the mind of man to be contented with the unostentatious medium between the bold materialism of Hobbes, and the assumptions of rationalism. With

this end in view he attacked the authority of antiquity, of the schools, and of the more modern systems of philosophy, with a vigor which, though wanting in profundity, yet at least had the credit of being lucid and eloquent.\*

The most remarkable portions of the work above referred to are the observations it contains upon causation, in which Glanville very clearly gives the germ of the theory, which was afterwards more fully developed by Hume. Causes, he argues, are the alphabet of science, without which it is impossible for us to understand any part of nature aright. But causes lie altogether beyond the reach of experience, which reveals to us nothing but phenomena; and, consequently, as experience is the only true source of human knowledge, it follows that the knowledge which men have pretended to reach of scientific and abstract truth, cannot be anything better than hypothesis.† This reasoning, though not very profound, is yet remarkable as a display of the systematic scepticism, which was then at work within a narrow circle, and as being a kind of preparation for the deeper and more comprehensive views, which were soon after propounded by the Scottish sceptical philosopher who succeeded him.

Mysticism, on the other hand, was favored at this time with a far greater share of attention, and was supported by far greater learning, than were the feeble efforts of incipient scepticism. The way to this was, perhaps, already paved by the efforts of Robert Fludd (born 1574, died 1637) to revive the fanatical doctrines of Paracelsus; but the more direct cause is to be found in the fact that many lofty minds, disgusted with Hobbism on the one hand, and unsatisfied with Cartesianism on the other, took refuge in the sublime philosophy of Plato, and devoted themselves with severe and ardent study to the elucidation of his writings. Cudworth, whom we have already classed amongst those who manifested a tendency to idealism, was one of these Platonic philosophers, and not unfrequently mingled up with his more strictly rationalistic views, notions which bear upon their features somewhat of a mystical character. But in Henry More, his friend and companion, (born 1614, died 1687,) we see exemplified the whole process both of scepticism and mysticism through which the human mind is

\* The "Scepsis Scientifica" was in fact an amended edition of a former work entitled "The Vanity of Dogmatizing," the former being published in 1661, the latter in 1665. Mr. Hallam expresses his opinion, that few books are more deserving of being reprinted than the "Scepsis Scientifica."

† See "Scepsis Scientifica," p. 142.

often led, after being compelled to distrust the conclusions of the current philosophy.

More was educated, according to the custom of the age, in the scholastic doctrines ; but, being driven from these through the increasing influence of the writings of Lord Bacon and his successors, he became a most zealous Cartesian, and even corresponded with Descartes himself on some questions relating to his philosophy. Finding, however, no certainty from these principles, and seeing with great penetration the paradoxes in which he would be involved by carrying them out to their just inferences, he plunged so deeply into scepticism, that he at length began even to doubt the proof of his own individuality. Not yet, however, was the yearning after truth altogether repressed by the spirit of unbelief ; for we find him soon after buried in the deep mines of Platonism, and hear him after a while declaring, according to the Platonic doctrine, that true and perfect knowledge, which alone renders us happy, can only be found in that mental purity and spiritual enlightenment, by which we are elevated to a union with the Divine mind itself.

More was deeply impressed with the belief, that the revelation which God had originally made to the Hebrew nation had been communicated through the Pythagorean books to Plato ; and not only this, but that the Cabalistic philosophy as well, contained a system of truth couched under its metaphors and symbols, which was likewise to be traced to the same Divine origin. On this ground he sought to prove, that there is a unity of spirit pervading these various writings, and that the whole sum of true philosophy had its germ in the illumination which man originally received from the supernatural communication made to him by God. The love which More manifested to the most ethereal portions of Platonism, his warm defence of the Cabala, his peculiar theological tenets, besides many of his poems, all clearly indicated his decided leaning to mysticism. These collateral views, however, might have been passed by almost unnoticed, or regarded simply as the poetic excursions of a lofty soul towards the elevated regions of spiritualism. But in addition to all this, there is in his philosophy a calm and dispassionate maintaining of the very same doctrines. It is when we find him asserting, on the one hand, that the *organ* of true knowledge in man is a direct and divine intuition ; and, on the other hand, that the original and only source of truth objectively considered is an immediate revelation from God,



that we become most sensible how deeply he had drunk into the spirit of philosophical as well as of religious mysticism.

Theophilus Gale, a Presbyterian clergyman, contemporary with More, followed in the same direction, although by no means to so great a length. He regarded the Bible alone as the source of true philosophy, and traced all the real knowledge that different heathen nations possessed to its pages, as the fountain from which the whole had originally sprung. There are two works in which Gale developed his views on these subjects. In the first of them, that entitled "The Court of the Gentiles," (1676,) he endeavors to trace all the notions of antiquity which deserve any consideration, whether upon theology or philosophy, up to the Scriptures; or at least to Jewish originals; and even goes so far as to show that the very words they employed were taken from this inspired source. His second work, called "Philosophia Universalis," follows up the argument in two parts. In the first he treats of the history of philosophy, more especially that of Plato, to which he was strongly attached: in the second he expounds his own theory on the origin of our knowledge, attributing the whole to an inspired source, as being the only theory upon which its very existence could be explained.

The most open and avowed mysticism, however, of this period, was that of John Pordage, (born 1625, died 1698,) who spread abroad much the same doctrines in England as Peter Poiret was at the same time engaged in diffusing throughout France. The philosophy of Pordage was founded on the writings of Jacob Boehme, whose notions he attempted first to systematize and arrange, and then to vindicate by an appeal to revelation. The general character of his system may be seen by the title of one of his chief works, which runs as follows:—"Theologia Mystica sive arcana mysticaque doctrina de invisibilibus æternis, &c., non rationali arte, sed cognitione intuitivâ descripta." With this title alone, we apprehend, our readers will be quite satisfied; and therefore, having brought it for a moment to their view, we must leave it to those who are curious in tracing the meanderings of the human spirit in its search after truth, to investigate more at length the principles upon which the doctrines advanced under it are founded, and to estimate the value of the results to which they may possibly lead.

The bald enumeration of the foregoing names may, perhaps, seem to require some apology. Our simple object in doing so has



been to show, what phenomena of a mystical and sceptical tendency actually made their appearance at this time, without crowding our pages, and taxing the patience of our readers with the useless details of long-forgotten theories.

Here, then, the history of the English scepticism and mysticism, as they appeared successively during the seventeenth century, closes. The philosophy of Locke, which became popular to an almost unprecedented extent towards the close of this period, produced an influence upon the thinkers of the age, which turned the whole current of metaphysical speculation into a new channel. The mystic Platonism and the Cartesian rationalism which had prevailed so extensively throughout the country, were gradually forgotten, and all eyes seemed turned to Locke as the great oracle who was to solve all the doubts in which philosophy had been involved, and to probe with unerring accuracy all the powers and faculties of the human understanding.

The principles of Locke's celebrated Essay we have already criticized at some length, and shown, we trust sufficiently, the dangerous readiness which it manifested, to regard experience as the sole basis, upon which any system of truth could be erected. To refute this, idealism, as we have also seen, raised a strong opposition; but whilst curbing the advancing sensationalism in its course, it did not stop in its own progress until it had, in the person of Berkeley, denied the very existence of the material world. The result of this contest was natural. To suppose that the extreme empirical principles, which flowed from the school of Locke, should exist on the one hand, and the perfected idealism of Berkeley should co-exist on the other, both leading to many strange and paradoxical results, without, at the same time, shaking the confidence of mankind in the power and authority of the human reason, and urging them on the road to scepticism, was, according to all the results of former experience, absolutely impossible. We naturally look, therefore, for an energetic display of scepticism, which should answer in some measure to the ability and acuteness with which the other rival theories were supported; and if there be any truth in the supposition that the sceptical element is the check, which, by our very constitution, is intended to curb the rashness of a too hasty generalization, our expectations could not, assuredly, in this instance, be disappointed.

The scepticism which arose out of the school of Locke, we find, in fact, to be one of the most deeply grounded in its principles, the

most logical in its arguments, and the most sweeping in its conclusions, of any which the history of philosophy has recorded; and the name of David Hume, its great advocate, will ever be remembered as associated with all that is bold and comprehensive in the attacks which have been made against the validity of human knowledge.\*

Hume united in himself, to a high degree, the observing power of sensationalism, with the faculty of abstract reasoning that has generally belonged peculiarly to idealism, and knew perfectly what had been found unsatisfactory in the one system, as well as what was inconclusive in the other. He came, properly speaking, from the school of Locke, and adopted throughout, the fundamental axioms of that philosophy for his own; but he could equally well employ a more abstract method of reasoning, whenever it suited his purpose, in order to strengthen the grounds of his startling unbelief.

To the first principles, from which he took his start, no one at that time could very strongly demur. It was then generally admitted that Locke's account of the origin of our ideas was correct, and that the whole of our knowledge might really be traced to sensation or reflection as its primary source. Hume, in fact, did little more than change the current phraseology, when he said that all our mental phenomena consist of *impressions* and *ideas*; including under the former our direct perceptions, and by the latter meaning the *signs* of them, which, by virtue of memory, association, &c., remain after the impression has ceased.† In addition to this, he was only following Aristotle, the scholastic philosophers, Descartes, Malebranche, and Locke himself, when he assumed as indisputable the representationalist theory of human knowledge, and took for granted, that by the *idea* of any real outward existence, we are to understand the representation or copy of it actually existing within our own minds; this copy being the sole means by which we can attain to the knowledge of the objective.‡

Now, these two fundamental principles, that of the representationalist theory of human knowledge, and that of the sensational

\* Hume was born at Edinburgh, April 26th, 1711, and died in 1776. A full and highly interesting life of Hume, with much new information from his manuscripts, has recently appeared, by J. H. Burton, Esq.

† Our references for Hume will be all taken from the "Enquiry into the Human Understanding," as it stands in the second vol. of his Essays. His Treatise on Human Nature, he himself wished to be cancelled, and always pointed to the "Enquiry," as containing his matured views. For Hume's theory of the origin of our ideas, see "Enquiry," sec. 2.

‡ Hume does not *maintain* the ideal system; he merely assumes it tacitly, as a truth which no one would question.

origin of our ideas, form the basis, and contain the prolific germs of all the astounding scepticism, for which Hume became celebrated throughout Europe. The first of these principles Bishop Berkeley had already employed, in order to undermine the evidence of the external world; and Hume clearly saw that all the arguments which Descartes or others had used to prove the existence of matter, completely failed before the more close and consecutive reasoning of that prelate. But, not content with the idealism thus originated, he went on to show that Berkeley, although perfectly correct as far as he had ventured to proceed in his argument, had not carried it out to its legitimate extent; that he ought to have applied his principles to the subjective as well as the objective world; and that, as impressions and ideas express *everything of which we are conscious*, (the whole mass of our knowledge being reducible to these two heads,) we have no right to conclude upon the real existence of a *substance* called mind, any more than of that which is termed matter.\*

It was against the representationalist theory, as being the foundation of these sceptical conclusions, that Reid directed the chief points of his controversy; and it was upon the successful refutation of it that he claimed his chief originality as a metaphysician. For our estimate of this controversy, therefore, we must refer our readers back to the last chapter, in which we have shown how far Reid appears to have merited the honor that he laid claim to, and pointed out in what manner the arguments of scepticism upon this head may be satisfactorily repelled. One additional remark only we would make, namely, that Hume deserves our thanks, not indeed for the intrinsic value of his opinions, but for the bold and lucid manner in which he brought the philosophy of his age to a great crisis. It was this crisis which proximately caused the overthrow of representationalism, as a theory of human knowledge, and gave rise to the renewed attempts which were made towards the close of the eighteenth century, for strengthening the main pillars of human belief.

The most famous portions of Hume's scepticism, however, were the conclusions he drew from his empirical principles respecting the origin of our ideas. Every notion, according to these principles, which cannot show some impression, *i. e.* some direct sensation from which it proceeds, is altogether delusive, and must be re-

\* For Hume's statement of the argument of scepticism, see "Enquiry," sec. 12.



jected as worthless by the true experimental philosopher.\* Amongst these merely imaginary notions, Hume places that of *power*, it being evident that we can learn from experience nothing more than the existence of certain changes, which take place under certain circumstances; and that there is no perceptive faculty in man, by which the link that connects any two given events can possibly be discovered.†

It was this argument that led Kant to undertake the "Critick of Pure Reason." "I freely own," remarks that great thinker, "that the suggestions of David Hume were what first, many years ago, roused me from my dogmatical slumbers, and gave to my inquiries quite a different direction in the field of speculative philosophy. \* \* \* I first inquired whether Hume's objection might not be a general one, and soon found that the idea of cause and effect is far from being the only one, by which the understanding *a priori* thinks of the connection of things; but rather that the science of metaphysics is altogether founded upon these connections. I endeavored to ascertain their number, and as I succeeded in this attempt, upon a single principle, I proceeded to the deduction of those general ideas which, I was now convinced, are not, as Hume apprehended, derived from experience, but arise out of the pure understanding. This deduction, which seemed impossible to my acute predecessor, and which nobody besides him had ever conceived—although every one makes use of these ideas without asking himself upon what their objective validity is founded—this deduction was, I say, the most difficult which could have been undertaken for the behoof of metaphysics. And what was still more embarrassing, metaphysics could not here offer me the smallest assistance, because that deduction ought first to establish the possibility of a system of metaphysics. As I had now succeeded in the explanation of Hume's problem not merely in a particular instance, but with a view to the whole power of pure reason, I could advance with sure, though tedious steps, to determine completely, and upon general principles, the compass of pure reason, together with what is the sphere of its exertion, and what are its limits; which was all that was required for erecting a system of metaphysics upon a proper and solid foundation."‡

Let us look then a little more closely at the problem which aroused Kant from his slumbers, and test the solution of it which

\* "Enquiry," sec. 2.

† Ibid. sec. 7, part. i.

‡ M. Willich's translation, in his "Elements of the Critical Philosophy," p. 13.



Hume proposed. All the objects of human inquiry, says Hume, are of two kinds; relations of ideas, and matters of fact. The former (as for example, the relations of space and number in geometry and arithmetic), present no difficulty; they are all discoverable simply by the operations of thought. In reasoning about matters of fact, however, the case is different; here one fact is always accounted for by another, and imagined to stand in close relation with it; as when the existence of human beings on an island, would be inferred, from seeing a house upon it.\*

Every inquiry, then, on *matters of fact*, as Hume correctly shows, is based upon the notions of *cause* and *effect*; the origin of which notions he discovers in experience, and entirely disowns the supposition that any idea of *power* or *adaptation* is connected with them. Here we conceive there is double error; for, first of all, *we have* the distinct idea of power (whether it be objectively valid or not), given in the perception of two phenomena succeeding each other; neither can all the reasoning in the world dispossess us of it. And secondly, the notion of cause and effect cannot come from sensible experience, because the idea of *power*, which forms the very peculiarity in all those successions, that stand related as cause and effect, is one which lies altogether beyond the reach of the senses. It is not *experience* which tells us, when a man is murdered, that there must be a murderer; the law which refers such an effect to an *efficient* cause, lies deeper in our nature than this, and has about it a *necessity*, and a *universality*, which prior experience could never have strengthened, nor the want of it have prevented. A single act brings the law or judgment into operation as readily as a thousand. Reid and Kant both contested the empirical doctrine of Hume on this point. The former appealed to common sense, and made the law of causality one of our intellectual instincts; the latter argued that the idea of cause and effect is one of the *a priori* forms by which the human mind necessarily views the connection of external things—a doctrine, which grounds Reid's instinct in a deeper principle or law of our inward nature.

Having concluded, then (incorrectly as we conceive) that all our notions of cause and effect, and the relations existing between objects, are referrible to experience, Hume proceeded to moot another and still deeper question, namely, upon what principle all the conclusions of experience are grounded.† Let it be admitted

\* See Enquiry, sec. 4, part 1.

† Enquiry, sec. 4, part. 2.

that we have observed certain phenomena to succeed each other invariably, *i. e.* to stand in the relation of cause and effect, on what ground can we affirm that the same sequences will still occur for the future. There is a universal and an unfailing expectation among men, that the same antecedents, under similar circumstances, will be followed by the same consequents. Whence does this expectation arise? Does it arise from a course of reasoning grounded on experience, or from habit, or from the intuitive judgment we necessarily form, whenever we see an effect, that there must be some efficient cause or causes at work, which, under the same circumstances, will operate again in the same manner? Hume in discussing the first hypothesis, showed with great power of reasoning, that it is impossible, from the mere experience of the past, to *demonstrate* by a logical process the recurrence of any set of events for the future. To the future, experience cannot at all apply, so that every judgment we form respecting futurity from the past must in fact involve the very expectation itself, for which we are attempting to account. To suppose that expectation, therefore, to be a logical inference from experience, would be clearly reasoning in a vicious circle. It would be deducing the expectation from the inference, and the inference from the expectation.\*

In this part of the controversy, Hume manifestly felt the strength of his position, and, we admit, used it to the very best advantage. Having refuted the theory of experience, therefore, he takes up, in the next place, the doctrine so often maintained by the Idealist—that the invariable succession of phenomena is known to us as an intuitive or *a priori* truth. This doctrine, however, is disposed of by him with still greater ease and brevity. All intuitive truth is such that its contradiction would imply an absurdity; but there is no absurdity in supposing many phenomena not to stand in the relation of cause and effect which hitherto have done so; and consequently the expectation in question must have some other basis.† The only conclusion remaining was, that our belief in the uniformity of nature, *as a universal truth*, must arise from habit or custom, gradually formed and strengthened by the power of association.

To explain the existence of this habit he enters into an analysis of the laws of association, from which analysis he concludes that there are three, and only three, principles of connection between our ideas—namely, resemblance, contiguity, and causality. Accordingly, our belief in the reality of cause and effect is discovered

\* Enquiry, sec. 4. part 2.

† Ibid.

to be a case of association, which, from its extreme frequency of occurrence, at last produces the idea, that there is a real link of connection between the two, and thus occasions our confidence in the uniform recurrence of natural phenomena to all futurity.\*

Now, if this be true, it is evident, that the belief in question must arise solely from the *vividness* or the *strength* of our associations. But does this, we ask, agree with the facts of our daily observation? Is there not a difference *in kind* as well as degree between a case of imagination, however vivid, and one of real belief? So evidently is this the fact, that we sometimes believe a thing, the impression of which is hardly clear and strong enough to be perceptible, while our most vivid conceptions of the imaginative kind altogether fall short of reality. Mere association can never produce belief, unless there is some other element in the evidence besides. Even Hume himself, with all his acuteness, wavers, hesitates, and stumbles in the prosecution of his theory, and in one place is even betrayed so far as to admit, that in the case of belief there must be *some* peculiarity in the manner in which the connected ideas are conceived, although he does not explain very distinctly what that peculiarity is.†

Again, the theory before us does not coincide with facts, when it states that our belief in the uniformity of nature's operations is formed and strengthened by the frequent recurrence of the association. If so, let any one produce a common instance in which such belief has ever appeared feeble, or in which frequency of recurrence has made it a whit stronger than it was before. Any child, after the first experiment, manifests his conviction in the laws of nature, as strongly as the octogenarian after the experience of his whole life; so that if the belief be of the gradual formation here described, it must have been *all* produced during a period of infancy prior to that in which we could make any observation upon it, or draw any conclusion to support the theory.

The theory which Reid maintained in opposition to this part of Hume's scepticism, (that, namely, in which he places our confidence in the stability of nature amongst man's instinctive beliefs,) was as complete as the philosophy of common sense could make it, and, we must admit, was well suited as a general statement to resist the

\* Enquiry, sec. 5, part 2.

† "Let us then take in the whole compass of this doctrine, and allow that the sentiment of belief is nothing but a conception more intense and steady than what attends the mere fictions of the imagination, and that this *manner* of conception arises from a customary conjunction of the object with something present to the memory or senses." Sec. 5, part 2.



progress of so irrational an incredulity among the mass of his readers. But perhaps the question might have been reduced to a more simple case of primitive judgment. All our primitive judgments, as we have seen in our analysis of Locke, are at first particular and concrete. The axiom, "things which are equal to the same are equal to one another," never suggests itself to a child's mind; and yet as soon as reason is developed enough to observe equality, that child shows that he can form the judgment, of which the above axiom is the general expression, in reference to any individual case that may come before him. In the same manner, when we first observe successive changes take place in nature, we form the judgment, that a parallelism of conditions indicates a parallelism of results; that the same powers ever exist to bring about the same phenomena under similar circumstances, or to put the judgment in another form, that the properties of similar things are themselves similar.\* But it is evident, that in this judgment there is something complex still, for it is not yet defined what we mean by the *properties* of things, or what we really do when we judge of their similarity. Properties of bodies, when analyzed, turn out to be simply another expression for the *powers* of bodies; and as we only know bodies through their properties, it follows that we can only know them as *existing powers*. Thus philosophy, in the same manner as mechanics, while it asserts the real objective existence of matter, yet regards it not as a dead inactive substratum, but as a combination of forces acting variously under given circumstances, and in given directions.†

Again, to go a step further, if we were asked whence we get the notion of power, (which we now see to be implied in that of substance,) I answer that we get it from the consciousness of our inward activity—from the will—or, what is the same thing, from *the me*—the real starting point, though not the sole element, of all our knowledge. Thus, then, we have traced the principle of our belief in the uniformity of nature up to a distinct fact of our self-consciousness. To make this clearer, let us present the same steps again in the synthetic form. First of all, I am conscious of myself *as a power, a will, an activity*. Moreover, I am conscious that under certain circumstances my will *invariably* puts forth its power upon the world around. In all cases of resistance, for ex-

\* See "Metaphysical Enquiry," by Isaac Preston Cory, Esq. p. 22 *et seq.*, in which many acute suggestions are thrown out upon Hume's problem.

† For a clearer view of the dynamical theory of matter, see our remarks upon Leibnitz, Maine de Biran, and Cousin.

ample, I am conscious of making a counter resistance, in order to maintain equilibrium. Gazing upon objects around, I see other powers on every side which operate upon me, and upon each other. Having witnessed the operation of any of these powers, in one instance, I get the conviction, that just as my will invariably exerts itself in opposition to other forces invading it, so these powers out of me, having done so once in my own experience, will do so again—that this is, in short, *the law of their activity*. Now the powers around me are material objects, the expression of their activity we call their *properties*: and hence the law just deduced, translated from the language of dynamics into that of our ordinary materialism, takes the shape of the judgment we have already expressed; namely, that the properties of similar things are similar. It is, in fact, but an application of the dynamical axiom, that action and reaction are uniformly equal and opposite.

The only empirical explanation of this problem which has been recently given, proceeds upon the affirmation, that when we have observed certain phenomena to take place in connection with certain conditions, this observation forms a part and parcel of our experience, so far as it is acquainted with the things in question; and that, as we cannot transcend our experience, we must necessarily imagine those things always to present the same phenomena for the future. “When we believe,” says Mr. Lewes,\* “that similar effects will follow whenever the same causes are in operation, we are simply *believing in our experience*, and nothing more. We cannot help believing in our experience—that is irresistible; but in this belief, the idea of either past or future has nothing whatever to do; it does not enter into the belief.” This reasoning, in fact, takes the whole thing for granted. It gratuitously strikes out all reference to past and future—the very points which form the whole peculiarity and difficulty of the problem—and then tacitly assumes, that our experience, which is and ever must be *past*, becomes absolutely valid for all futurity. Hume’s reasoning with reference to the theory of experience, all holds good against this explanation; he saw clearly enough that our belief in a past fact could not become a *law of belief* for futurity, without something besides mere experience to account for it. But, it is urged, we cannot transcend our experience, and therefore we *must* conceive of the phenomena just as we have witnessed them. We affirm, in reply to this, that we *can* transcend our experience in all matters

\* Biographical History of Philosophy, vol. iv. p. 51.

of a contingent nature ; that we can easily imagine, without any contradiction, that fire will not ignite gunpowder, or that the sun will not rise to-morrow. The thing to be accounted for is—*why*, out of all the possibilities of the case, we should hold fast to the precise succession of events we have once witnessed, and feel convinced that it and no other will recur. Upon no ground can I see that this conviction is explained, except it be referred to a fixed principle of our nature ; and that principle we have now grounded in a distinct fact of man's self-consciousness. I know by my own consciousness, that the power of my will resists all the aggression of other powers around me through the medium of the nervous system : in the same manner, having discovered other powers acting on the same principle of uniformity, whether in reference to myself or each other, I now see the law of my own consciousness operating throughout nature. On this fact, then, is grounded our belief in nature's stability ; for were nature to operate *differently*, the very law of forces which we have seen to be in operation, would be reversed.

Against this theory it is no objection to say, that the belief in question is so simple and immediate, that we cannot imagine all this inward process to take place before it is arrived at. It must be remembered, that all our faculties operate spontaneously, long before we become reflectively conscious of their operations ; and that, however complicated the process may be, yet there is no reason why it may not have taken place amongst the very first efforts of the infant reason. Of course we do not regard this or any of our primitive judgments, in the first instance, as an axiom of universal application ; we first have the belief *in the particular*, and we gradually come to regard it more and more universally until at length it appears before us in a full axiomatic form.

The more I reflect upon the whole problem that has just been considered, the more clear does it seem to my own mind, that the foundation principle of all inductive reasoning can be traced to a primitive fact of our consciousness, revealing the law of forces, whether in nature or in the soul. I would not, however, rest the validity of the great axiom of induction absolutely upon this psychological theory ; for on whatever theory we may choose to account for it, still the fact remains the same, that the idea of change or of phenomenon necessarily involves and suggests that of a cause, a purpose, or a sufficient reason, and that this is accompanied with a full conviction of the stability of nature's operations.



Against these conclusions, with all their theological consequences, it is in vain for scepticism to level its shafts.

The philosophy of Hume, as a whole, originated and fell with himself. A more partial and less daring scepticism might, probably, have gained many followers; but it is the inevitable result of every system, professing universal unbelief, to destroy itself. The man who by any process of reasoning involves every portion of human knowledge in doubt, instead of persuading any one to follow his conclusions, does little more than controvert his own principles by a "reductio ad absurdum." The real effect is not to make us doubt the validity of our knowledge, but to shake our confidence in the philosophical, or rather unphilosophical axioms, by means of which such results could be obtained. "Universal scepticism," says Sir James Mackintosh, "involves a contradiction in terms. It is a belief that there can be no belief. It is an attempt of the mind to act without its structure, and by other laws than those to which its nature has subjected its operations. To reason without assenting to the principles on which reasoning is founded, is not unlike an effort to feel without nerves or to move without muscles. No man can be allowed to be an opponent in reasoning who does not set out with admitting all the principles, without the admission of which it is impossible to reason. It is, indeed, a puerile, nay, in the eye of wisdom, a childish play, to attempt either to establish or confute principles by argument, which every step of that argument must presuppose. The only difference between the two cases is, that he who tries to prove them, can do so only by taking them for granted; and that he who attempts to impugn them, falls at the very first step into a contradiction, from which he never can rise."\*

Of the English *mysticism*, to which the last century gave rise, we can give but little account, inasmuch as it flowed more into the channel of religious than of philosophical speculation. The school of Swedenborg made some advancement in our own country, as it did in other parts of Europe, and numbered a few cultivated minds amongst its supporters. But the middle of the seventeenth century was the period in which the community began to be aroused from its religious lethargy to a new life and energy; and whatever tendency there might have been to seek for truth in the deeper feelings of our spiritual nature, it all flowed into the stream of religious excitement, which then became so much broader and

\* See "Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Science." Art. Hume.

deeper than it had been for ages before. The belief in Divine influence strongly characterized that movement, and the habit of looking within and reading the heart's religious experience was constantly encouraged ; so that an element was at work, more or less, throughout the whole of society, that necessarily took the place of those inward impulses, which, if not placed under the guidance of Christianity, would, in all human probability, have developed themselves in the rise of philosophical mysticism.

Here, then, we close what is more directly the historical portion of our subject. We have traced the progress of sensationalism and idealism up to the age in which we live, and seen the different forms of scepticism and mysticism to which their mutual contests have given rise. Our next, and still more important task will be, to exhibit in its various movements the advancement which the human reason has made during that half of the nineteenth century, which has now arrived almost at its termination.

## PART II.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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#### PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

BEFORE we proceed onwards with our history, and bring it over the threshold of the present century, we must make a brief pause, in order to take a compendious view of the ground we have now hastily travelled over, and to collect together the results, which may have been gathered up on the way. Looking at the philosophy of modern times in connection with that which for almost two thousand years had preceded it, we see it bearing the marks of an *independence* which, since the days of Plato and Aristotle, had been altogether unknown. The scholastic ages in particular were marked by a well-nigh slavish deference to authority, an authority which was balanced with some degree of equality between Aristotle on the one hand, and the Pope on the other. Philosophy during this period was content, not only to be held in leading-strings, but to be nurtured and instructed by dogmatic theology, as an obedient child by its parent or guardian. It was, at present, timid in all its movements, feeble in its efforts, and felt so much the need of extraneous support, that it willingly allowed, and even sanctioned, an appeal to those masters, who, the one in the ancient the other in the modern world, had succeeded in gaining the confidence, and then in subduing the reason of mankind.

The Reformation was a revolt against authority; it presented the spectacle of the human reason once more asserting its independence, and indignantly bursting the chains by which it had so long been bound; for whether we regard the movements which then took place in the religious, the political, or the philosophical world, they are all alike characterized by the same determination to shake off the trammels of servitude, to which the will of hu-



manity had during many past ages submitted. It was the sixteenth century which witnessed the main heat of the battle of reform; then it was that events which had long been brooding over society came to their crisis; then that authorities which had before been only doubted, were openly disavowed; then that the first overthrow of intellectual and spiritual despotism was both given and received.

The *seventeenth* century presented another new page in the history of mankind. The arm of Bacon had given the first fatal stroke to the authority of Aristotle, and had stripped the laurels from the brows of the hitherto invincible heroes, who had taught the trivium and quadrivium of human learning; but it was not in the power of any one man to tear up all the ramifications into which the roots of the middle-age philosophy had extended themselves, and to reap even the first-fruits of the principles he might succeed in establishing. This was, in fact, the mission which the whole of the seventeenth century had to perform. Accordingly, as in the department of politics, it was chiefly occupied in shifting the old and worn-out institutions of the dark ages; as in the department of religion, it was employed in defining the power and authority which in matters of faith the individual mind ought to possess, and of which it had been unrighteously plundered; so also the main efforts of philosophy, during that century, were expended in clearing away the rubbish, which scholasticism had heaped up in the path of its successful advancement. So diligently was this object pursued by the Hobbists on the one side, and the Cartesians on the other, that before the century came to its close the worthless material of the old and crumbled edifice of the scholastics had well-nigh vanished, and the foundations were already laid for a new species of philosophy, grounded not upon the syllogism, but upon the *analysis of thought*. As a proof of this, be it remembered, that it was during the seventeenth century that Locke furnished the principles of the modern sensationalism, and Leibnitz the data which afterwards expanded into all the phenomena of the German idealism. We may say, then, in few words, that the sixteenth century pulled down the scholastic edifice, leaving it a mass of ruins; and that the seventeenth cleared the ground, and laid the foundations for our modern philosophy.

We now see the *eighteenth* century ushered in under the most favorable auspices, and wait accordingly to inquire what was the office it had to perform in the development of philosophical truth.

That office, in brief, was not to pull down, but to rear up. The new foundations being already laid, the new systems sketched out, it had to test the data upon which they proceeded, to expand and mature their results, and, lastly, to show their bearing upon all the various departments of human knowledge. One thing especially was achieved by this age, towards the independence of the human mind; and that was the withdrawal of philosophy from the authority of revelation, and the due assignment to each of their respective limits. Bacon and Descartes, although they were the first great abettors of the spirit of independence, yet never got beyond the influence of their theological system, or dared to assert for the child they had reared a complete freedom from all dogmatic restraint. Locke and Leibnitz certainly evinced a far greater philosophical purity, both in the method they pursued and the fundamental principles they asserted, but it was not until the eighteenth century had brought those principles to their maturity, that the authority of revelation in the department of philosophy was altogether overcome, and each was left to perform its own part, and cast its own portion of light upon mankind.

The eighteenth century, in thus placing philosophical reasoning upon its true footing, succeeded in exhibiting both the excellencies and the defects of the various systems which the renewed energy of the human mind had originated. The service rendered thereby to the advancement of human knowledge was of the greatest importance. The state of philosophy previous to this trial which it underwent, had been anything but satisfactory; many of the prevailing systems gave such a practical exhibition of weakness and insufficiency, that they threatened to involve society at large in the coldness and despair of universal scepticism. All this, however, was only preparing the way for the critical philosophy of the Kantian school, and in so doing contributed not a little to bring metaphysical speculation into a more advanced state. The writings of Kant, therefore, may be viewed as the flower of the philosophy of their age, forming in truth the boundary line between the metaphysics of the last and those of the present century. Such we may regard as an abstract of the advancement of philosophy from its revival down to the opening of the century, in which we are now living.

It is not enough, however, for us here simply to take this superficial view of the progress of speculative science during the two last eventful centuries; we need to look more closely into the

*nature* of the speculations, with which they were filled, and to see in what manner they attempted to solve the great problems about which philosophy is conversant.

All intellectual philosophy of a fundamental character turns upon the two poles of *thought* and *existence*. Thought represents the subject, existence the object ; and the whole problem of philosophy is to analyze the phenomena of the former, and then to determine what they unfold to us respecting the latter. There is a world of thought within us—there is a world of existence about us ; what then is the exact relation which the one of these poles of philosophy holds to the other ? Are thought and existence *eternally* opposed, or is there any point in which they perfectly coincide ? Can thought ever be shown to be an attribute of being, or can we trace existence up to that degree of sublimation where its very essence seems to be *Thought* itself ? Here, then, are the two data of all speculation—a subject and an object—consciousness with its phenomena, and being with its essential attributes—a self, and a not self. All philosophy works upon these materials, tries to understand them, to unfold their relations, if possible, to trace them to the point where they originate and where they unite. Such a point, it is true, we may not be destined by scientific deduction ever to reach ; but still it is to the clearer development of this problem that the tide of human speculation must ever perpetually roll forward. Chemical analysis may never discover the ultimate unity of matter—physiology may never arrive at the vital principle ; still to these points they are ever struggling to attain. In the same manner, speculative philosophy aims at deducing *the one great principle of the universe*, and the nearer it gets to it the more perfect does it become.

Let us look to the history of this problem in modern times. The middle ages pursued the investigation of it in their own peculiar manner. All the speculation of the scholastic philosophers, it is well known, clustered around two centres—first, the ideal system of Aristotle, which was no other than an attempt to show the relations of thought and existence with regard to our sense-perceptions ; and, secondly, the controversy of the nominalists and the realists, which was simply to determine the point whether the real essence of external things is given in the impression they make upon us through the senses, or in the general idea we form of them by the reason. In both cases, therefore, the problem was to solve



the mutual relations which thought and existence hold to each other.

This question, then, we may consider, was handed over undetermined to the speculators of more modern times ; and the different methods of viewing it give us the key to the two opposed systems of philosophizing, with which our modern history is acquainted. The one system starts with this problem—Given, the real phenomena of existence, to deduce from thence the nature and varieties of our thoughts and ideas. The other reverses the question, and puts it in this manner—Given, the phenomena of our own minds, to deduce from thence the reality and the nature of the world without. The one commences with the objective, and deduces from it the subjective ; the other starting from the subjective, seeks to deduce the objective. If we take the simple product of sense as the starting-point, and from that construct the world of ideas, our philosophy is of the former kind, and must be entirely empirical ; if we begin with our own mental conceptions, and from them construct the world without, our philosophy is of the latter kind, and must be, to a greater or less extent, rationalistic.

Hobbes and Gassendi,\* followed up by Locke, took the empirical direction, and from the analysis of sensation attempted to account for the whole mass of our ideas. According to the two former, man is entirely material, and all his mental phenomena consequently nought but corporal affections ; according to Locke, however, human thoughts are inward images (ideas) of outward things—sometimes simple representations as in perception, and at other times modified representations as in reflection ; so that the relation between the objective and subjective world is here perfectly determined, the latter being only a living picture of the

\* There has been much dispute as to the real opinions of Gassendi upon the question of Materialism. That he was not a very firm materialist is evident from the circumstance that his views on this point have been so much contested. At the same time there are some of his works in which the truth of the materialist hypothesis is maintained too clearly to be misunderstood. In his "*Disquisitio Metaphysica*," written in opposition to Descartes, the sensational tendency of his philosophy is peculiarly manifest. "It remains to be proved," he says, (vol. ii. p. 183,) "that the faculty of thinking is so far removed above the corporal nature, that the animal spirits cannot receive such a character as to be rendered capable of thought." A little further on he says that we may conceive of mind "as a pure, clear, subtile substance, which spreads itself like a wind over the whole body." The same conclusion only can be drawn from his argument respecting the *idea of body* possessing extension, (p. 273,) and that likewise concerning the union of mind and body, where he says—"All union must be produced by the very close and intimate contact of the things united. But how could such a union take place *without body*?" The retort of Descartes is well known, who, to the satirical exclamation of Gassendi, "*O, anime!*" replied, "*O, caro!*"



former, and all truth consequently consisting in the inward representation, or idea, being perfectly correct. The sceptical results which Hume drew from this position were opposed on the part of the Scotch metaphysicians, by giving to certain fundamental principles of belief an independent subjective existence, by denying the doctrine of representative knowledge, and thus disturbing the fixed relation of causality, which Locke and others had instituted between the outer and the inner world. The successors of Locke, however, both in France and England, went resolutely forward in the direction that was pointed out for them, until they landed in pure materialism—a doctrine in which thought and existence are made identical, not by tracing both up to their common source, but by cancelling all that is peculiar to the former, by making the mind itself merely a piece of material organization, and mental phenomena nothing but the motion of its particles. The climax of this school, therefore, was to solve the great problem of philosophy, by blotting out one of its terms, and to regard matter as the only absolute and self-existent reality. Such was the result of the empirical theory ere the eighteenth century came to its close.

Descartes was the founder of the opposed or rationalistic method of philosophizing. The relation between thought and existence was in his case expressed by the position "*Cogito ergo sum*," a sentence in which the reality of existence was made to flow as a direct inference from the phenomena of consciousness. Whether, therefore, thought can be identified with existence or not, yet this much at any rate is clear upon the Cartesian principle, that all our knowledge of the latter must be involved in our consciousness of the former, that all ontology has its roots in psychology. Spinoza, however, carrying out the fundamental principle of Cartesianism, asserted the *universal* identity of thought and existence, referring them both alike to the "*ens realissimum*," the one universal substance of which thinking and extension are only different *modi*. Hence the *rationale* of his assertion of the perfect parallelism between the inward processes of thought, and the outward processes of nature.

Leibnitz, perceiving that the pantheism of Spinoza must superinduce the most rigid fatalism, and ultimately tear up the roots of all morality and religion, introduced the element of *power* into all the individual existences, of which he supposed the universe to be composed, and by so doing changed the stern mathematical view of Spinoza into the more pliant and accommodating form of a dy-

namical theory. If all things are modes of the Divine Being, (Leibnitz contended,) they must each and all contain the element of freedom, which is absolutely inherent in Deity, and consequently every atom or monad must comprehend the principle of its own self-development. What is a monad but a power, acting according to the laws impressed upon it by the Deity; and what is *thought* but the expression of that power, in the case of monads which have attained to the elevation of self-consciousness? His whole system of monadology may therefore be regarded as an answer to the inquiry of speculative philosophy, respecting the relations of thought and existence in the universe, constituting, in fact, one of the most ingenious methods ever devised for tracing them both up to one fundamental principle.

Wolf gave the principles of Leibnitz popularity and extension, by systematizing and arranging them; but instead of expanding the fruitful germs of thought which that master-mind had thrown out, he elaborated carefully the *form* of his philosophy, and neglected the *essence*. Wolfism was, perhaps, the most complete attempt which was ever made to ground an entire system of rational philosophy upon the ordinary principles of logical reasoning; and if nominal definitions could give a perception of the real nature of the things defined, nothing more satisfactory and complete could be wished for, than the Encyclopædia of philosophy which he originated. It sought, however, to solve the problem of metaphysics simply by the analysis of our processes of thought, and never succeeded in finding a valid passage from thence into the world of objective reality. Comparing, then, the views of Hartley and Priestley on the one hand, with those of Spinoza and Leibnitz on the other, we see that the great question of speculative philosophy was brought to a solution by the two opposed methods of philosophizing in two altogether different ways. By the materialists, it was solved by making thought synonymous with matter in some of its peculiar affections; by the idealists, on the other hand, by making matter homogeneous with thought, and accounting for the common principle of both, by means of a pantheistic doctrine, or a theory of monadology.

It was just at this point that Kant, seeing the errors which existed on both sides, came forward with his reform, and by a searching criticism of man's cognitive faculty, showed how impossible it was, by any process whatever, to arrive at a scientific knowledge of absolute existence at all. With regard to *material* existence,

he proved that we can never go beyond phenomena, so that actual experience here marks the furthest limits of our knowledge. With regard to the pure conceptions which the reason strives to form respecting the essence of the soul, or the universe, or the Deity, he showed that these were all based upon fallacious conclusions; so that the main result of his Critick was to cut off the possibility of our ever coming (upon philosophical principles) to the point from whence thought and being alike spring, and where they are both identical. Kantism, therefore, was the destruction of metaphysics, properly so called; it removed the ground-problem beyond the reach of the human faculties, and sought to silence all ontological speculation for the future. Instead, however, of altogether denying the absolute in human knowledge, Kant admitted it in connection with those subjective and regulative principles of the human mind, which, though wanting objective reality, yet may be regarded as absolute to man, so long as he retains his present mode of existence. The attempts of the rationalistic method, then, to solve the problem of philosophy, as far as the eighteenth century was concerned, ended in a well nigh completed system of subjective idealism. Whatever of absolute was admitted at all on scientific grounds, was confined to the human subjectivity; and, therefore, if the paradox can be allowed, was regarded as a *relative absolute*. This conclusion of the Kantian metaphysics would have involved the whole philosophy of their illustrious author in the darkness of a most rigid scepticism, had their effects not been contravened by the authority of the practical reason.\*

These different and unsuccessful attempts to fathom the depths of thought and existence, together with the contradictory conclusions which they gave rise to, necessitated the appearance of scepticism, which from time to time either laughed or reasoned down whatever was untenable in the different philosophies, to which it was chiefly opposed; and then mysticism, still grasping after truth, but distrusting the more rational methods of attaining it, strove to dictate, as from some inward oracle, the fundamentals of human knowledge, as belonging to a region too lofty for the wings of reason ever to reach.

\* This view of the problem of philosophy has been brought out with great clearness by the Hegelian school. Hegel, it is contended, had alone reached the climax. In him, subject and object, thought and existence, are absolutely one. Fichte found a subjective idealism, in which the me was *the world-all*. Schelling created an objective idealism, in which thought appears only as one of the developments of nature. In Hegel's absolute idealism alone the two terms are retained, but their unity demonstrated. On this, see Michelet's "*Geschichte der letzten Systeme*," p. 12, *et seq.*

These, therefore, are the four elements which were brought over from the preceding ages to the nineteenth century; and it is the history of their further progress, and of their various modifications as manifested within that portion of it which has already passed, to which we have now more especially to direct our attention. Whenever, therefore, we find the principle asserted, that truth is discoverable by the human faculties, but that it must all ultimately rest upon the experience of the senses as its foundation, we shall regard this as a manifestation of empirical or *sensational* philosophy. When, on the contrary, we discover attempts to unfold truth grounded upon the native powers of the reason, we shall attribute such attempts to the rationalistic method, or as we have termed it, to the philosophy which is characterized by the *idealistic* tendency. When, again, the power of discovering absolute truth is altogether disowned, we shall recognize in such disavowal the spirit of *scepticism*; and when, lastly, the capacity of man's natural faculties to attain it being denied, some other element within us is pointed out as supplying the deficiency both of reason and sense, whether that element be faith, feeling, or direct illumination, we shall refer such principles to the operation of *mysticism*.

Errors we shall have to point out in all the schools; but, notwithstanding these, we shall be quite sure to find some benefits conferred by each, so far as it has been a real and earnest striving after knowledge. Accordingly, after the analysis which each system has afforded of the materials that lie peculiarly within its own province, we shall only have to look for an eclectic philosophy, that will combine the results of the whole, and indicate the advancement which the nineteenth century has made in the development of metaphysical truth.



## CHAPTER IV.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN SENSATIONALISM.

HITHERTO we have followed pretty closely the historical order in sketching the various systems of philosophy, which appeared from the revival of the speculative spirit in Europe down to the commencement of the present century. In rendering a faithful account of the philosophy of our own age, it will not be possible to follow so completely as we have done the chronological flow of events, since by so doing we should prevent the possibility of giving a classification of the different schools grounded upon their proper philosophical characteristics. In France, it is true, and to a great extent in Germany, the development of speculative opinions has gone on with so regular a step, that the chronological and the philosophical orders in some measure coincide; in these cases, therefore, we are not obliged, even when observing the latter order, to depart very widely from the former. In England, however, we look in vain for any *progressive* school of metaphysics, that has been steadily advancing as the age has rolled round: we see nought but isolated efforts, many of which, indeed, are not wanting in some of the best characteristics of philosophical thinking, but which have far too little connection among themselves to form what we might term an independent school of philosophy. In describing these efforts, it will not be our object to collect all the works and name all the authors who have contributed to the metaphysical literature of the country during this century, since the multiplicity of shades which their opinions present, would only confuse the reader in his endeavor to make a correct estimate of our philosophy as a whole, and offer very little instruction in return; but we shall rather attempt to point out the main directions in which speculation has hitherto seemed to flow; and we shall do this by bringing forward simply the more prominent writers to whom such speculations are chiefly indebted.

SECT. I.—*Of Modern Sensationalism in England.*

In taking a broad view of the different shades of *sensational* philosophy as the present century has thrown them before us, it is somewhat difficult to find a mode of classification, by which we may include everything that bears upon it a scientific character. The best classification we have been able to make, proceeds upon the principle, that there are just three different directions which it is possible to take, and which different writers have followed, in erecting a spirit of empiricism. *First*, there are some who have pursued a purely metaphysical analysis, and attempted to show, in this manner, that every notion springs from the senses as the original channels through which the whole material of thought has been supplied. *Secondly*, there are others, who, waiving this kind of abstruse analysis, have fixed their attention upon man's practical life, and furnished a whole system of ethical philosophy grounded on sensational principles. And, *thirdly*, there are others, who commence with a physiological investigation of the human frame, and from this seek to deduce the nature and the origin alike of all mental and moral phenomena. Those who take the first course, we shall term sensational metaphysicians; those who follow the second, sensational moralists; while the third class may be designated sensational physiologists.

## (A.) SENSATIONAL METAPHYSICIANS.

In beginning with the consideration of the first of these classes, we are carried back at once to the writings of Locke, as the model upon which this kind of metaphysical analysis has for the most part been formed. We have already shown the process, by which *some* of the professed adherents of Locke's philosophy, both in England and France, strained his principles beyond their just limits into materialism itself. It is not to be supposed, however, that such has been the case with *all* the followers of this school. Several authors have appeared, who instead of hurrying forward into materialistic conclusions, have determined to keep more closely in the path which was trodden by the master himself, and have contented themselves either with furnishing fresh proofs and illustrations of his main positions, or with showing more fully in what way our more purely rational notions can be deduced from the

original intimations of sense. In England, indeed, Locke, in his own genuine character, has long been the great philosophical authority ; and, although the phraseology of our metaphysical writers has more recently been much modified by the school of Reid and his Scottish followers, yet the acute analytic spirit, which is so observable in Locke's own writings, has in some striking instances been revived, and led to many new, though similar, speculations on the origin of our ideas. We must not forget to mention, however, the very observable effect of Hartley's observations respecting the laws of association upon all the writers of the Lockian school since his time ; for, although in many instances no mention has been made of that acute writer, yet the important part, which is assigned by all to the phenomena of association, clearly shows us, how much is owing to the views upon this subject, which he was the first to promulgate.

Perhaps there is no English writer since Locke who has upon the whole theorized with so much ability on these topics, and analyzed our mental processes upon sensational principles so acutely, as the late Mr. James Mill, author of "An Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind," which appeared in the year 1829. We may regard this author, without doubt, as standing at the head of the sensational metaphysicians of the present day, and, consequently, may safely use his writings as the most complete existing representation of the partial success, which has more recently attended philosophical investigations of this nature. We cannot do better, therefore, under the present head, than first of all to give a brief sketch of Mr. Mill's method of analysis, and then to point out in what respect, under the view of another and more spiritual system of philosophy, it may be regarded as unsatisfactory and incomplete. In accomplishing the former of these purposes, every facility is offered by the admirable order, brevity, and clearness, with which the whole work is pervaded, and which leaves hardly anything to be desired on the score of a philosophical style and arrangement. In accomplishing the latter, we shall attempt to use that impartiality, which is becoming, and, indeed, necessary to the attainment of truth in all philosophical discussions.

Our author having stated that the main object of the philosophy of the human mind is to expound the more complex phenomena it presents, commences by laying down its *simple states*. The first and foremost of these are, of course, *sensations* ; respecting which little, if anything, new is said, except it be some very just remarks

upon the sensational feelings which accompany the action of the muscles, and those which arise from the alimentary canal.\* Having finished this view of our sensations, he next comes to *ideas*, which he explains to be, copies or traces of sensations that remain after the sensations themselves cease.† Respecting the formation of these he offers no theory, but only states the fact as indisputable, that such traces do exist. These two classes of feeling, then, form, according to Mill, the *whole material* of our thoughts and emotions, they form the basis of all our mental operations.

The next point to be observed is, that our mental phenomena do not recur arbitrarily, but according to a certain order and arrangement, the law of which is termed the association of ideas. This law of our mental constitution is shown to play the most momentous part in man's intellectual and moral development, causing our ideas to cluster together, and become at length indissolubly united, either in the synchronous or successive order, according, of course, as the sensations, of which they are copies, have been experienced synchronically or successively. In the former case they give rise to *complex notions*, in the latter to *trains of thought*.‡

The next important fact, is that of assigning to our sensations and ideas certain *names*, in order that we may communicate them to others, or retain them more easily for ourselves; under which head our author goes into a long and very luminous exposition of the origin and nature of the various parts of speech, of which all language consists.§ This, then, we may consider as the *ground-work* of Mill's whole analysis, the elementary processes being reduced to sensation, ideation, association, and naming. The rest of his work is occupied in showing how from these elements all the complex phenomena of the human mind may be fully and satisfactorily explained. Into this part of the analysis we shall now briefly enter, giving the principal conclusions, that are arrived at, in our own words.

First of all, *consciousness*, inasmuch, as it applies generally to every mental phenomenon, is simply a generic term, under which all the subordinate classes of feeling are included; which, therefore, can no more contain any element different from the feelings themselves, than any other genus can contain *essentially* aught that is not in its species.||

\* Chap. i. secs. 6, 7, 8.

† Chap. ii. p. 41.

‡ Chap. iii. throughout.

§ Chap. iv., which contains also a long section on Predication, in which the author gives his view of the principal processes of formal logic.

|| Chap. v.



*Conception* is likewise a generic term, only less extensive than consciousness; inasmuch as the latter is a universal name to include *all mental phenomena*, whether sensations or ideas, while the former is the name of a class of phenomena comprehending ideas only.\*

*Imagination* is the same as conception, with this simple difference—that, whereas conception is applied as a generic term to mean *individual* ideas, imagination is only applied to *trains* of ideas, which hang together by the law of association. When I am conscious of *one* idea in the mind, I conceive; when I am conscious of a succession, I imagine.†

*Classification*, or *generalization*, a process which has given rise to so much metaphysical discussion, is easily explained. I give a name to an individual; I then apply the same term to another individual of a similar kind; then to a third, and a fourth, and so on, until the term by the indissoluble law of association calls up indefinitely any of the individuals, to which I have severally applied it. Thus, a general term is not the mark of a reality, as the realists supposed, nor is it a word without any idea attached to it at all, as the nominalists assert; but it is the mark with which an indefinite number of simple ideas is associated, and under which they become combined.‡

*Abstraction* is a somewhat different process. We experience a given sensation in connection with different clusters of qualities, as a black man, a black horse, a black eagle: we give this sensation a name, say "*black*," in order to note it, and we *connote* or name with it the particular cluster, to which in any given case it is applied. In some instances, however, we drop the connotation, and, in order to show this, we add some mark to the term which expresses the original sensation. Thus we may think of *black*, without assigning anything which is black, and then to mark the fact of all connotation being dropped, we add *ness* to it, and form the abstract term blackness. On this principle, then, abstractions are simply concrete terms with the connotation dropped.§

*Memory* is an important phenomenon, but by no means an original faculty. It contains, first, the idea of the thing remembered, and secondly, the idea of my having seen it. The former element is easily accounted for by association, but the latter element is more complex. This is found, on analyzing it, to consist of three

\* Chap. vi.

† Chap. viii. p. 206, *et seq.*

‡ Chap. vii. p. 178.

§ Chap. ix.

things—the present or remembering self, the former or remembered self, and the train of consciousness which intervenes between them, and identifies the two selves as being the same personality. To explain fully, therefore, the nature of memory, we have to await the analysis of the ideas of personal identity and of time.\*

*Belief* is the next point to be noticed, which is of three kinds—Belief in events or of real existences, belief in testimony, and belief in the truth of propositions. The first kind of belief is a case of very close and immediate association. This we see illustrated in the belief of our acquired perceptions, where we indissolubly associate certain distances, &c., with certain shades of coloring.† The same principle holds good with respect to our belief in the existence of a cause as antecedent to every effect, and of matter as the ultimate cause at which our association stops.‡ The second kind of belief, that which we yield to testimony, is also a case of association, depending equally upon experience, inasmuch as we firmly associate reality with that species of testimony, which we have previously found to be uniformly true.§ The third kind of belief, that of the truth of propositions, is synonymous with judgment, which, in fact, is nothing more than our recognition of the coincidence that exists in the meaning of two names. Thus, when I say, “Man is a rational animal,” I simply recognize the fact, that the two names, man and rational animal, stand for the same thing.|| Last of all, *ratiocination* is to be regarded as a case of judgment in its most perfect and extended form, which thus completes the analysis of our intellectual powers, and reduces them all to the elements which we have just before indicated.¶

Having finished this portion of his task, the author proceeds to test its accuracy by investigating those *terms*, which, in all metaphysical systems have been generally considered the most remarkable, as well as most difficult of explanation. Beginning with terms which express relation, as those employed when sensations, ideas, or external objects are mentioned *in pairs*, he shows the notion of *a line*, to be involved partly in the sensations of touch, and partly in those of a muscular nature, which accompany the extending of the arm.\*\* The notions of *cause* and *effect* are explained to be synonymous with the antecedence and consequence

\* Chap. x. p. 251.

† Chap. xj. p. 259, *et seq.*

‡ Chap. xi. p. 263, *et seq.*

§ Ibid. p. 268, *et seq.* See also here the expectancy of the uniformity of nature's operations resolved into a case of association.

|| Ibid. p. 300.

¶ Chap. xii.

\*\* Chap. xiv. p. 22.

of phenomena.\* The idea of *extension* is supposed to be a modification of those sensations by which we conceive of lines as greater or less ; and then, lastly, those abstract terms which we apply to objects as being related to each other in respect of *quantity*, or *quality*, are so analyzed, as to appear equally dependent with the rest upon the aid of experience.†

Next to relative terms, he proceeds to prove that *numbers* are simply marks to show that one sensation comes after another ;‡ that *privative* terms generally are merely indicative of the absence of sensations, or rather expressive of that state of consciousness, which the absence of sensations produces ; that *space* being an instance of such terms, is merely the privation or absence of bulk ; and that the term *infinity* indicates that state of consciousness in which the idea of *one unit more*, if it be number, or of *one portion more*, if it be extension, is closely associated with every preceding number or portion that has gone before it.§ The only three important terms that now remain, are time, motion, and identity.

*Time*, according to Mr. Mill, is derived from the succession of our sensations. In this succession there is always something past, something present, and something future, which, by dropping the connotation and adding the sign, gives us pastness, presentness, and futureness. The combination of these three gives rise to all that is contained in our idea of time. It is, to use the author's own language, a single-worded abstract, involving the meaning of these three several abstracts.|| *Motion*, again, is the abstract idea of moving. In the idea of a body moving, there are the ideas of the body itself, of position, of a line, and of succession, all of which may be accounted for on sensational principles. Take, then, a number of moving bodies, drop the connotation, and we have the whole idea of motion.¶ Lastly, *identity* is merely another term for *sameness*, and this again, is simply expressive of a certain case of belief, the evidence of which varies with the subject, but which in every case arises from association, and, consequently, from experience.\*\*

With regard to the *active powers*, our author's analysis of these is equally ingenious with that of the intellectual. Sensations are, some pleasurable, and others painful : when, therefore, we recall them, the ideas they give rise to must also be either of a pleasurable or painful nature. Our state of consciousness, however, in

\* Chap. xiv. p. 37.

† Chap. xiv. sec. 3.

‡ Chap. xiv. sec. 5.

§ Chap. xiv. p. 39, *et seq.*

¶ Chap. xiv. sec. 4.

\*\* Ibid. sec. 7.

¶ Ibid. sec.

the sensation is essentially different from that in the idea, inasmuch as we cannot revive the actual pleasure or pain which were caused by the bodily affection, but only the recollection of them. The *idea* of pleasure, therefore, in contradistinction to the *sensation* of pleasure, we term desire; the idea of pain, aversion.\*

Sometimes, again, pleasure or pain arises from an immediate cause, and sometimes from a remote: the lash of the executioner is an instance of the one, the sentence of the judge the other, since in this latter case the pain comes at one remove from the actual sensational feeling. In the same manner pleasurable and painful *ideas*, that is, desires and aversions, often come from remote causes, while they derive still further variations from being contemplated as past or future. In these few principles we have, according to Mill, the basis of all the passions, desires, and emotions of the human mind, and only need to search further into the more remote causes, from which they spring, in order to gain a complete analysis of this part of our constitution.†

Amongst these causes we find that certain objects, by virtue of particular associations with them, excite in us the feeling that we term the sublime and the beautiful; whilst other pleasurable or painful feelings, which arise as consequent, either upon our own actions or those of our fellow-creatures, have acquired the name of the moral sentiments. Here, therefore, we have the foundation of all æsthetical and moral philosophy.‡

With regard to the *will*, which is usually considered as constituting so large an element in our moral life, our author considers that it is synonymous with desire; that an action is said to be willed when it is desired as the means to a certain end, or rather, when it is associated as a cause with pleasure as the effect; and that the muscular actions of the body, which are usually termed voluntary, are, in fact, *necessarily* consequent upon certain sensations or ideas, which we can only control through the medium of the great law of association.§ Such is a brief and necessarily imperfect outline of Mill's analysis. To estimate it fully, it must be read and studied throughout; but yet, the above sketch may be sufficient to show the kind of philosophy which it advocates, although it very inadequately conveys the arguments by which it is supported.

Now, in offering some remarks upon this system, we must first of all inquire, what the starting point is from which it proceeds,

\* Chap. xix.

† Chap. xxiii.

‡ Chap. xxi. sec. 2.

§ Chap. xxiv.



and what the elements which are taken for granted as being primary and unresolvable; because upon this first step the whole character of any philosophical system mainly depends. In looking to this point we see at once, that the phenomena of mind in the system before us are not traced to a single, and uniform source. The French sensationalists, as we shall hereafter have occasion to show, started with the simple product of sense as the sole groundwork of all mental manifestation, and attempted to prove that every phenomenon is a movement, more or less disguised, of this one faculty. The idealistic philosophers, again, started with the pure conceptions of reason, and attempted to build up the whole superstructure of knowledge upon this basis. In the work before us, on the contrary, there are clearly *two* primitive elements brought forward, sensations and ideas; and consequently two original and corresponding powers of mind, namely, sensation, and what might be analogically termed *ideation*. Of these, however, sensation occupies by far the superior place, inasmuch as it furnishes all the original materials of our thoughts, while an idea is taken to signify, not (as Locke would have it) everything about which the mind can be occupied, but simply the traces of our sensations, which are left, after the outward cause is removed.

Now, in this admitted faculty of forming *ideas* of things, there is more involved, we imagine, than seems in the work before us to be supposed. *E. g.* Instead of reducing such faculties as memory and judgment to the two elements above stated, (that of sensations and ideas,) we much doubt whether they are not involved as simpler elements in the process of ideation itself. An idea, it is affirmed, is the trace or copy of a sensation, and it is essential to it, on this principle, that we should recognize it *as being the representative of the original or sensational feeling*, otherwise the inward idea could have no practical reference to any outward reality. But the question is, how am I to know without the aid of memory, that there ever was a sensation which preceded it; or, in other words, how am I to refer the state of consciousness in which I exist when I have an idea, to a former state, in which I existed, when I had a sensation? In order to know that the idea has anything to do with a previous sensation, there must be a consciousness of the fact that something *was* in my mind, as well as the fact that something *is* in it; and to know this requires the power we term memory—a power which consciously connects the past with the present, and without which, consequently, it is impossible for the theory of ideation to

be complete. Again, if an idea be a trace or relic of a sensation, the knowledge of this involves not only memory, but also a *comparison* between two states of consciousness. If no comparison is made, how am I justified in saying that my idea is a trace of, or has anything to do with, a sensation? but if a comparison *is* made, then there must be some mental power or process by which such relations are observed, and this process we term judgment. By no conceivable method could memory and judgment arise simply from the successive consciousness of sensations and ideas; for those successive states of mind must have eternally remained *separate* and *isolated* points in our being, had not the *power* of memory and the *power* of judgment united them into a continued and connected stream of conscious existence. We cannot but suspect, therefore, that Mr. Mill explained the simple by the complex, rather than the complex by the simple.

Empirical writers, in fact, are perpetually addicted to the habit of regarding our sensations as though they were already notions, and cancelling that whole process of the intellect which takes place between the bare sensational feeling and the complete idea, when put into such a form as to make a distinct element in our knowledge. A sensation is but the consciousness of the moment: it is an evanescent *feeling*, which lasts only while the organ is affected, and then is completely and forever gone. To form a notion, these evanescent feelings are grasped, combined, and shaped into certain moulds, by the intellectual or constructive faculty, just as the shapeless particles inserted in the kaleidoscope are thrown into their several forms by the inward construction of the glasses. Take any notion as an example—say a house. Mere sensation cannot account for this. As a sensation, it would be simply a subjective feeling—a momentary consciousness, not an abiding idea. And if it cannot be an idea itself, neither can its trace or image be so. To form the notion of a house, I must have the conception of an external object, which is something quite different from the sensational feeling; I must view it as occupying space, as possessing quantity, quality, and relations; and all this implies an intellectual process, which is quite lost sight of by those who speak of our sensations as giving us the whole conception of things themselves. The inward or intellectual element, in short, is just as necessary to the existence of *experience* as the outward, or sensational.

The whole theory of ideation, indeed, is grounded on a false and illusive material analogy. It is supposed that as the impres-

sion of an object upon any soft material remains after the object is gone, so the impressions of our sensations remain on the mind. We have no reason to suppose that any such impression remains. My *idea* of an object does not stand to the *sensation* of it, in the relation of an image to its original. The true statement of the case is this—that when the sensational feeling is produced by contact of the object with the nervous system, the understanding shapes the material thus afforded into a *notion*, supplying from its own constitution the *mould* in which this notion is to be thrown. Having done so, the notion exists in the mind as a part of our experience, and can be recalled by the aid of memory at any future period, whenever the laws of association may prompt.

From the consideration of the human faculties we now come to the deduction of our purely intellectual notions. And here there are still greater objections that arise against the conclusions of the work before us. In this department of his analysis the peculiar theory, which is maintained, *of cause and effect*, lies at the foundation of almost all the other results. Mr. Mill considered it proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, nay, since the days of Brown, to have become almost axiomatic, that cause and effect imply nothing more than uniform precedence and consequence. This, however, must be regarded as far too bold and hasty an assumption, when we consider that the doctrine referred to is denied almost universally by the German metaphysicians; when we hear one of the greatest thinkers of our day calling it “*a fantastical theory which gives a denial to universal belief, and to facts; a theory destructive of all true metaphysics;*”<sup>\*</sup> and when we find even the first natural philosopher of the age describing Brown’s theory as one, “*in which the whole train of argument is vitiated by one enormous oversight, the omission, namely, of a distinct and immediate personal consciousness of causation in his enumeration of that sequence of events, by which the volition of the mind is made to terminate in the motion of material objects.*”<sup>†</sup> We contend, as will be more fully explained elsewhere, that the conscious effort of our own will gives us the distinct idea of *power* in causation, which then becomes to us the type of those vast ever-working powers of the universe, by which we are surrounded, the foundation of our con-

<sup>\*</sup> See Victor Cousin, in his Preface to the “Remains” of M. de Biran.

<sup>†</sup> See Sir John Herschel’s Treatise on Astronomy, in the “Cabinet Cyclop.,” p. 232. We may here remark, that it has of late years become very common amongst many writers to assume the truth of Brown’s theory as altogether unquestionable, and as being universally admitted. We know not whether to attribute this assumption to ignorance, or to sophistry—it seems hard to account for it upon any third principle.



fidence in the uniformity of nature, and the basis of our belief in the great First Cause of all things.

If, therefore, the fundamental principle, on which so much is built up, is shaken, the analysis of some other of our most important ideas becomes vastly modified. Let us take that of *substance*, which our author conceives to be a case of indissoluble association, arising from the inveterate habit, we have gradually formed, of assigning a ground or cause to all phenomena. According to this theory, we may talk about *clusters* of sensations, but to talk about substance, matter, substratum, or anything of this kind, is merely giving objective existence to a pure imagination of our own minds. "To each of the sensations," says Mr. Mill, "which we receive from a particular object, we annex in our imagination *a cause*, and to these several causes we annex a cause common to all, and mark it with the name substratum."\* We have arrived, therefore, if this be true, at pure Berkeleian idealism, and the sceptic may now come and chastise us for our folly in believing anything so unreal as a material world. The philosophy that commences in pure sensationalism has no choice but to end in an idealistic scepticism. The extremes of both systems here meet in one.

But, we doubt not, our author would have practically repudiated these sceptical conclusions, and protested that he was far from rejecting the real existence of matter as something over and beyond our perception of qualities. On what ground, then, would he make this protest? Is it sufficient to say that his association of ideas is so strong that he cannot help assigning, as antecedent or cause to such associations, *something that really exists*? Is it not clear that the sceptic may shatter this argument at once by assigning a thousand strong associations, to which no reality whatever can be attached? Has not many a man, for example, closely associated with his fear at being alone in the dark the conception of a goblin or ghost? Why is it, then, that he still holds to his practical conviction of a material world, while he laughs at the goblin, both being similarly cases of strong association? It cannot be because the association in the one instance is so much stronger than in the other, for such is not actually the case. Should we not rather say, "My belief in a material world is simple and indestructible, it can be traced back to my earliest conscious being, it has never been strengthened by accumulated associations, never weakened

\* Chap. xi. p. 263, *et seq.*



by any subversive arguments, nay, it is a necessary element in the relation I feel between my conscious self, and that around me which is not-self; between the subjective and the objective element in every sensation, I have experienced, from my earliest existence to the present hour."

Instead, therefore, of reducing perception, as Mr. Mill does, to a case of strong association, we contend, with the philosopher of Scotland, that it implies the existence of another faculty higher than sensation; that it contains a primitive *judgment*, in which the idea of substance is involved without the aid of association at all. The whole doctrine of belief in real existences, as here stated, proceeds upon the supposition that it is the superior *vividness* of the idea, or strength of the association that constitutes our confidence in objective reality. These two facts, however—1st, that the most insignificant sensation brings conviction, while the most vivid pictures of imagination do not; and, 2dly, that one single case of conjunction produces belief in the relation of cause and effect, as firmly as a thousand—can never on this hypothesis be adequately explained. And even supposing the ideas above referred to, to be explained by means of association, still it must be remembered that association itself implies certain deeper *laws*, by which its exercise is regulated. So that after all the labor that has been expended upon the attempt at reducing all the more complex phenomena of mind to this one principle, we must fall back at last upon the fundamental laws of belief, by which that very principle operates.\*

To go at length over the analysis of the other notions which are adduced, such as infinity, time, space, &c., would carry us further into the discussion of these questions than is compatible with our present plan. It has been one of the many grand results of a spiritual and more reflective philosophy, however, to show, that the idea of *the absolute* plainly marks one great division of our knowledge; that the infinite stands in such a manner opposed to the finite, as that the conception of the former must necessarily be involved in the latter; and that time and space are both particular

\* "To me it appears evident that association itself, how comprehensive soever it may be, is only a particular law, regulated by the still more comprehensive and indeed universal laws of human belief. \* \* Is it not obvious that our associations themselves are necessarily regulated by these primary laws? Is not the relation of cause and effect one of those, by which our ideas are associated? And do we not associate certain feelings with certain external phenomena, *because* these do, first of all, by their very nature, suggest the existence in which we believe?" Young's "Lectures," lec. xxix. p. 292.

modifications, which the notions of the finite and infinite undergo. To any theory, like that of Mill's, which places the idea of body, substance, or bulk at the foundation of that of space, there lies the insuperable objection, that we cannot conceive of body at all except as it exists in space; and that, although we may require to be brought into contact with body prior to our forming the conception of space, yet that *logically* the former must be posterior to, because it involves the notion of, the latter. In the same manner, against any theory, which reduces time simply to the succession of events, there lies the similar objection, that if you take away the notion of duration, no succession is possible, inasmuch as all succession implies continued duration between the points of consciousness, just in the same manner as body implies continued space between the atoms of which it is composed. Time and space, therefore, are *a priori* intuitions, which are absolutely necessary as elements in all our experience. The former gives us the sphere of all inward, the latter of all outward observation; time being that in which all the flow of our thoughts must take place; space being that in which all external objects, to our perception, must exist. As to the notion of *identity* or self, we should argue that this too cannot be deduced from experience, because it is already implied in every act of consciousness. Without this notion there would be no unity in our sensations or ideas, no chain to bind them together; our conscious existence would be only a series of unconnected impressions, and the experience of the last hour might belong to a different being from that of the present. While, therefore, we cannot but read with much admiration many of the acute and able analyses of notions, with which the work we are considering abounds; yet, in those cases where our primitive judgments and the ideas flowing from them are concerned, we cannot but consider, that the author has been led astray from the truth by the sensational theory he was laboring to sustain.

The view which Mr. Mill has taken of the intellectual powers could not but have some influence upon his theory of the *emotions*. Sensations and emotions are regarded by him as generically synonymous, so that the feeling produced by the lash of an executioner, and that produced by the sentence of the judge, are each spoken of as a sensation, the one arising from an immediate, the other from a remote cause. These two classes of feelings, on the other hand, we regard as vastly dissimilar. The one arises immediately from the presence of an external object, the other, being an

*emotion*, has no immediate connection with such object ; the one feeling springs from without, the other from within ; the one follows upon an affection of the nerves, the other from a conception of the mind ; the one is entirely uncontrollable so long as the bodily affection lasts, the other is, to a great extent, under the dominion of the will. The only *sensation*, which the judge produces, is occasioned by the air set in motion by his organs of speech acting on the tympanum of the prisoner's ear ; but it is the *meaning* of the words he utters, acting upon the intellect, that sends a thrill of shuddering *emotion* through his frame. We can conceive of no system of psychology rendering an adequate view of all the phenomena of our nature, unless the broad line of distinction is plainly marked between the sensitive and the emotional faculty. This might be shown far more clearly in the case of the moral emotions than any other ; into these, however, we shall now forbear to enter, inasmuch as the ethics of sensationalism will come more fully before us in the next section.

There is one point, however, we would further touch upon, and that is the account which our author gives us of *the will*. According to this account, it seems to us impossible to avoid drawing the conclusion, that human life is altogether the sport of *circumstantial fatalism*. The elements of volition, on his theory, are sensations, ideas, and motives, leading lastly to muscular movements of the frame. First, I experience a sensation ; next, I am conscious of this sensation leaving its trace behind it, and forming an idea ; thirdly, the power of association comes to bear upon the matter, and leads me to connect certain actions of my own as causes, with pleasure as the result, which is all that we mean by a motive ; then, lastly, the internal feeling of pleasure, I experience, produces the muscular movements which we know to accompany volition. Every step in the process of human action as here described, it will be seen, is passive and uncontrollable. The sensation is so in the first instance, the idea is so in the next, that peculiar association by which a desire or motive is created is so in the third, and the power which our internal feelings have over the muscular frame is so in the last. The defect in the process here described is what Sir J. Herschel terms the "enormous oversight" of leaving out our *distinct and personal consciousness of causation*. Every man assuredly acts on the conviction, that he is in himself a finite power, or cause of such a nature, that he can, if he choose, oppose the instinctive impulses of sense, and modify outward circum-

stances by his own voluntary determination. Amidst all the influence of external agents upon us, we still feel perfectly conscious, that we can originate action from within, that we can form purposes, stay their execution, make a final determination, and then pass from the inward volition to the outward execution, which execution again we can continue or suspend by means of the same will which gave it a commencement. The human mind, therefore, is something independent of its circumstances; it is a spontaneous, self-regulating existence—a distinct personality, the very essence of which consists in activity. Accordingly the fundamental error, as we think, of all systems of sensationalism, consists in taking for granted, that *mind*, until the channels of sense convey to it life and feeling, is a nonentity, or at any rate a mere passive entity; whilst in fact we can no more conceive of it without thought and action, than we can of matter without figure and extension. This point, however, will again recur, so that we shall for the present pursue it no further.

The only other thing, we have now to remark, is the total silence which is observed by our author upon man's religious faculty. That the existence of God, the infinite essence, the "*causa causarum*," could not be deduced on the principles laid down in the work before us, is manifest; because even if we possessed the distinct *conception*, its whole objective reality would be destroyed by reducing it, as must be the case, to a strong instance of the power of association, leading us to assign a cause to all phenomena. That the religious *emotions*, moreover, must in this philosophy all be considered as purely pathological, is equally clear, because emotions and sensations are viewed as being altogether homogeneous. We see no room, therefore, in the system of psychology we have just considered, for any of the more lofty and spiritual phenomena of human nature. The soul fettered down to sense, can only live in the present; its noblest conceptions are but the images of sensual objects; its highest perception of moral law, is but a calculation of pleasure and pain; the foundations of religion, so far as they depend upon our rational ideas of God, of Duty, of Immortality, are undermined; and the holy stream of disinterested love to God, in which the weary spirit finds its only rest, is dried up at the very fountain. Whether the author would have sanctioned such inferences, I have no means whatever of judging; but unless I have greatly mistaken his principles, the application of correct logic must necessarily bring such conclusions sooner or later to light.



The whole of our objections, then, may now be concentrated in a single remark. The author, it is evident, fixed his attention upon one of the great fundamental facts of our consciousness, that of finite nature operating upon us through the channels of sense. In looking steadfastly to this fact, he doubtless succeeded in analyzing many phenomena, that might otherwise have eluded all observation; but in the meantime he entirely lost sight of the other two fundamental notions, those of the active self and the infinite. Through the omission of these elements he reduced our pure and primitive ideas to the character of mere abstractions, and the energy of the will to that of a passive sensational feeling.

The error committed is the exact opposite of that which Kant committed before him. The German philosopher, in discovering all the *forms* of the understanding, neglected sufficiently to analyze the *matter*; the English philosopher, on the contrary, in directing his attention almost exclusively to the matter, well nigh entirely neglected the form. Many thanks, however, are still due to him for his labors, inasmuch as they give one tack to the vessel in which the world's philosophy is sailing, which, while it takes that vessel for a time from its true course, will, nevertheless, aid in bringing it at last so much further on its way to the land, where truth reposes. Analysis, as we have before remarked, to be close and penetrating, must give rise to error as well as to truth; it only needs an enlightened eclecticism to grasp the one, and to reject the other.

We have entered into Mr. Mill's analysis somewhat more fully than we should have done, (considering that our design is to give a brief historical sketch of the different systems of philosophy with their comparative merits, rather than to dwell at length upon the works of particular authors,) because it is so able a representative of the advanced school of Locke, as existing in England during the present century. Not that we mean to say, that Locke and Mill in all respects coincide. So far from that, the points of difference are very considerable, and on many questions, as that of the classification of the intellectual powers, quite dissimilar; but still both the method and the nature of the analysis so closely resemble each other in the two cases, that they are at once seen to belong to the same school of philosophy.

The precise position which Mill would take in the scale of sensationalism, is about midway between Locke on the one hand, and the French Ideologists on the other. The latter of these regard

all mental operations as being different forms of sensation; the former, although looking upon the senses as the primary source from whence the *material* of our knowledge is derived, yet strongly asserts the existence of certain active faculties, by which this material is moulded; the author now before us, differing from both, admits only sensations and ideas, comprehending under these more than the French philosophers, but by no means so much as our great English metaphysician would contend for. Other writers of the same class have wavered somewhere between these two points; but they all retain such a degree of resemblance to each other, that to adduce them here would be only to reproduce similar doctrines under varied forms, and then to urge against them similar objections; neither, indeed, were we to attempt it, could we bring forward any authors, who have set forth the main doctrines themselves with so much clearness and force of reasoning, as the one we have already examined.

There is one work, however, recently published, of such great and unquestionable merit, that it were wrong to omit a distinct mention of it, in estimating the sensational phenomena of the age—I mean a work entitled, “A system of Logic Ratiocinative and Inductive,” by John Stuart Mill. The author, it is true, aims simply at discovering and expounding the proper methods of investigating truth, without pledging himself to any system of speculative philosophy; but still there are so many points of a speculative nature touched upon, all in the spirit of the “Analysis” above considered, that he must necessarily be regarded as a partisan of the modern Lockian school of metaphysics. The evidences of his adherence to this school are scattered more or less throughout the whole work. Let us adduce one or two examples.

First, in his discussion of the real meaning to be attached to the term *substance*, he embraces the opportunity of placing the science of ontology entirely beyond the reach of the human faculties.\* Not, indeed, that he has pretended to enter into the full merits of the case, since that would have been foreign to the object of his whole work; but the view he takes of the question, “*en passant*,” implies, that we have no right to assume any conception as asserting objective validity, which lies (as that of substance does) without the range of our sense-perceptions, and rests upon purely rational or intuitive evidence. According to this view of the question, we may understand somewhat of qualities, since they come

\* Vol. i. p. 78, *et seq.*

to us as actual phenomena, but we can know nothing of substance, since, if it exist, it is hidden behind a screen of impenetrable obscurity.

Now we believe that a thorough analysis of the case will show, that *reason* has as much right to assure us of the nature and existence of being or substance, as perception has to assure us of the phenomena we term qualities; that just in the same manner as we have an outward intuition of the one by the senses, so we have an inward intuition of the other by the reason. The cognizance of attributes by perception is as much a *subjective process*, as much a part of my inward consciousness, as is the cognizance of matter or substance by the reason; and if we deny the objective validity of the latter, there is no superior evidence why we should accept that of the former. As well may we, in fact, reject the reality of any *quality* as an objective phenomenon, as reject the substratum in which it adheres. We know the *properties* of the external world, says our author, because we have sensations which immediately convey them. But then, what are sensations except states of mind? If a state of mind termed *sensation* can give us the knowledge of properties, why may not a state of mind termed intuition or *reason* give us the knowledge of substance? Reason has as much right to take us out of ourselves as perception, and if the one cannot assert objective validity, neither can the other. Let any one say, therefore, on what ground we can *believe the existence* of anything whatever out of ourselves, and we can show him the same ground for believing in the reality of substance—let any one, moreover, show on what principle we can *comprehend* the nature of any objective reality, and we can show the same principle of comprehension with reference to substance. There is no valid medium, therefore, as it seems to us, between complete subjective idealism, like that of Fichte on the one side, and the admission of ontology as a proper branch of scientific investigation on the other. So long as we keep within the subjective circle, we are pure subjective Idealists; but once without it, we have the same access to *being* as to mere phenomenon, that is, we have simply the guarantee of our faculties for either.

Another very decisive proof of the author's sensational tendency is found in his support of Brown's theory of causation.\* In no work with which we are acquainted is the law of causality so ingeniously and plausibly traced to experience as in this; and in

\* Vol. I. Book iii. chap. 5.

none is the whole theory put in a more forcible and unobjectionable light. Ingenuity, however, though it may mislead for a time, will never succeed eventually in carrying along with it the suffrages of mankind against the fundamental convictions of human nature. Try as we will to sink all idea of a real connection between cause and effect, the belief will eternally recur; and however plausibly the theory may be propounded, yet it will ever be found wanting so long as there is left out in the analysis the one important link to which we have before referred, that of a personal consciousness of *power*.

Instead, then, of resting the evidence of the law of causality upon a simple induction of empirical facts, we should trace its establishment to a process of the following nature:—Every man, when he produces change upon the outer world, is conscious of putting forth a *power* in volition, which power is exerted upon the external object. If the same power be again put forth in similar circumstances, he knows intuitively, that the same change will take place. Hence the notion of *power*, put forth by some cause, is associated with the perception of *every* effect; and the force emanating from our own will becomes the type upon which we conceive of power, as universally exerted in the production of every other possible phenomenon. Thus the law of causation primarily emanates from our own volition, and being expanded by the aid of experience, at length assumes the form of a universal principle, applicable to all the phenomena of the universe. To this subject, however, we shall again return.

Another aspect of Mr. Mill's sensationalism is given in the controversy with Prof. Whewell respecting the foundations of mathematical reasoning.\* We are aware that the side he defends is to a certain extent strengthened by the name of Dugald Stewart, and some other writers of high standing in the philosophical world; but, nevertheless, we are unable to confess ourselves convinced by the whole line of argument they have employed. The point of the controversy is this—What is the ground of belief in mathematical axioms? Are they experimental truths, *i. e.*, generalizations from experience, or are they necessary truths, arising from the *a priori* intuition of the human reason? Mill asserts the former to be the case, Whewell contends for the latter.

The discussion of the question, which when expanded might occupy a volume, virtually concentrates itself upon two points. It

\* Vol. I. Book ii. chap. 5 and 6.



is argued, first by the spiritualist, that an experimental truth must be one that is cognizable by the senses; and that, as this is not the case with mathematical axioms and conceptions, they must necessarily be removed beyond the limits of mere empiricism. Take, for example, the axiom, that two straight lines cannot inclose space, even if they be *prolonged to infinity*. Were this a truth of simple observation (it is contended), we could never be assured of its accuracy, because we can never see an instance in which two intersecting lines are *infinitely* produced. Whence, then, comes the conviction, that, supposing them to be so, still there is a necessity that they should present just the same relative properties? To this it is replied in the work before us, that mathematical truths are such as can be painted on the imagination to any extent; that although we can never *see* two lines infinitely produced, yet we can conceive them to be so; and that, by a kind of internal observation, we become convinced that they will always hold the same relations to each other, as by the aid of direct sensation we perceive them to hold on a small scale.

That there is some ingenuity in this theory must be freely admitted, but still it is open to many objections. Let us allow, for argument's sake, that a mental picture of all possible lines and angles may be depicted on the imagination. This picture must either represent the cases which fall *within* the actual limits of our experience, or cases which lie entirely *beyond* them. The former representation, of course, may be referred simply to the power of conception, or (as Mr. Mill might call it) ideation. Its result is an *idea* made from the direct information of the senses, and answering accurately to it. So far, therefore, there is nothing to serve the cause of the sensationalist; as *all* would admit that we may have an experimental idea of *anything* of which we can have a sensation. If, however, we depict what we have never witnessed "*in sensu*," (as, for example, the case above quoted, of two intersecting lines infinitely produced,) then the question comes, What law, or what necessity does *this* representation follow? Mr. Mill would explain it by saying, that the actual experience we have in the one case, leads us to imagine the same relations to hold good in the other case—that, namely, which lies *beyond* experience. But here the very stress of the difficulty is untouched, for the inquiry still returns—Why should our imagination be thus bounded by sense?—Why are we *necessitated* to conceive of these lines and angles in definite and particular relations? In other subjects the imagination

roves at will, and forms relations entirely at variance with all experience. Objects the most heterogeneous are linked together by the wild and capricious effort of the fancy. Why not in this subject also? *Actual* experience, it is allowed, could never show us, that two *infinite* intersecting lines would never meet;—why, then, may we not *imagine* them as meeting; or on what is grounded the subjective *necessity* of depicting them eternally diverging? It appears to us, that there is but one explanation of the matter, namely, that *reason* forbids it. Once get beyond the bounds of sense, once allow the conceptive faculties to take the thing into their own hands, and we see not that, in this case more than in any other, they would be bound to follow the dictates of experience, or that their conceptions can properly be limited by anything, except by the very laws of our mental constitution.

Let any one ask himself, *what it is* which gives us the conviction that the relations of the experimental case will precisely answer to those of the imaginary and supersensual? It is not enough to say, that experience forbids the supposition, that the relations should vary in the two instances, for with the latter instance, experience confessedly has nothing to do. Such a conviction cannot possibly arise except from the fact, that the *a priori* forms of the understanding itself compel us to conceive of the relation of the lines in no other way, whether they be matters of experience, or whether they be not. In reply, therefore, to Mr. Mill's argument, that the relations of figures lying beyond experience are imaginary inductions from those which lie within experience, we urge that the moment the empirical boundary is overstepped, all such inductions must be valueless; and that conviction can only now arise from the *necessity* of the case, which necessity is based upon the ground-forms of the understanding. The whole argument, in fact, that we reason in mathematics upon figures either of pure sense, or drawn from experience, will not stand the test of any careful examination. Experience could *never* give us perfect lines, triangles, and circles—to the senses, they must all have breadth, and thickness, and irregularity;—and yet the whole of the reasoning proceeds upon the very hypothesis of their absolute perfection. “If we have no experience of facts relating to lines without breadth, and perfect circles, we cannot possibly have experience except *with relation* to lines possessing breadth, and imperfect circles, &c. But as things cannot divest themselves of any of their properties, we can only have experience of things *as they are*. Experience is not an arbi-

trary act of mind. We have no control over experience ; we must take it exactly as it presents itself. As experience, therefore, cannot present us with phenomena divested of any features which are inseparable in actual fact from the phenomena, and we reason, according to our author, entirely upon experience, if we attempt to reason with respect to things, feigning them to be divested of some of their properties, we reason apart from experience, *i. e.*, we do what we never do.”\*

We must come, however, to the second great argument which the spiritualist employs, that, namely, arising from the *universality* and *necessity* of mathematical axioms. These two attributes, it is argued, could never flow from experience, inasmuch as no experience can extend to all possible cases, and become the voucher for universal and necessary truth. To this Mr. Mill replies, that the necessity of a thing simply means the inconceivableness of its being otherwise, and that this inconceivableness all arises from the strength of the opposite associations.†

Now, if *mere* association can produce the feeling of necessity and universality, respecting which we are treating, then it must produce it alike in every case, where the association has been constant and uniform. For example, we have always associated snow with whiteness, and soot with blackness ; according to Mill's theory, therefore, we ought to consider the one *necessarily* white, and the other *necessarily* black. This is not, however, the case ; there is nothing inconceivable, nothing contradictory to our reason in black snow, or in white soot ; nor would it do violence to our faculties if we were to witness both of them to-morrow. The necessity we feel in the case of an axiom—such as, “that two right lines cannot inclose a space,” is altogether of a different nature. Here the word inconceivable, attached to the negation of the axiom, has a far more intense meaning than it has in the cases which Mr. Mill adduces ; so much so, that it would do violence to our reason to suppose that negation to be for one moment possible. Let any one put together the two propositions, “Snow is white,” and “Two right lines cannot inclose a space,” and consider, whether their contradictories are in the same degree of inconceivableness. If they are found to be not so, then there must be some additional reason besides association, which creates the idea of necessity in the latter. The cause of the difference, as it ap-

\* See British Quarterly Review, No. vii. p. 29.

† Vol. I. Book ii. chap. 5, sec. 6.



pears to us, is simply this, that the one would contradict my experience, the other would contradict my reason; the former axiom being an empirical induction, the latter being an *a priori* judgment.

We have brought forward these few theories from the work above mentioned, in order that they may serve as examples of the nature and spirit of Mr. Mill's sensationalism. Upon the whole, however, the sensational doctrines do not appear with nearly the same intensity, which they exhibit in the "Analysis of the Human Mind." In one passage particularly, the author very clearly expresses his doubt, whether the attempt at explaining all our abstruser sentiments, emotions, volitions, &c., by the laws of association, has been at all successful, and controverts the corresponding theory of belief, which is maintained in the "Analysis." Although, as we have seen, there are some points in the work to which we cannot agree, yet we cheerfully allow, that it must be placed among the very first efforts of philosophical thinking in our own country. We believe that the "System of Logic" is yet destined as a book of fertile suggestions to bring forth beneficial results, which many years to come will in all probability fail to exhaust.

Every school of philosophy, when it has given rise to works of a theoretical and then of a practical nature, begins to feel the want of an historian, who shall describe the progress of thought in the world from its own peculiar stand-point. The Analyst of the new sensational school of England was Mr. James Mill—the Logician is Mr. John S. Mill—the Historian has now appeared in Mr. G. H. Lewes, writer of the "Biographical History of Philosophy," (Knight, 1846). The author of this little work has travelled in a small compass over the whole field of philosophy, from the earliest ages to the present day, and has investigated the most prominent systems, which appear on the page of history, with some vigor and success.

In spite of a levity of style, hardly consistent with the grave discussion of philosophical questions, and a dogmatism by no means attractive, he has thrown his elucidations and criticisms before us, with great clearness, and sometimes with considerable power of argumentation. At the same time we *altogether* differ from the view he has taken of the nature of metaphysical researches, and much fear that, were it carried out to its ultimate consequences, it would peril some of the most precious germs of human knowledge.



Mr. Lewes, it should be understood, has carried his sensationalism so far as to profess himself an unmixed admirer of Comte, an entire advocate of positive science. In philosophy (by which he understands whatever relates to the origin of things or *causes*, and whatever relates to the existence of things *per se*, or their *essences*),\* he has no belief. He admits, indeed, that it has answered a good end, inasmuch as it has led mankind to the real or positive method of investigating truth; but the whole attempt at solving *metaphysical* problems he sets down as utterly vain and hopeless. The history of philosophy, as he views it, is intended to show that all metaphysical investigations have gone round and round in one perpetual circle, that they have ever thrown the same great questions up to view, and that we are now as far from solving them as when the struggle first began. He proposes, therefore, to write the life of this wondrous thing—Philosophy; which after having enlightened the world up to the nineteenth century, is at length defunct, or at least expiring.

Philosophy, then, being renounced the true object of human investigation, is affirmed to be positive science, "*the aim of which is to trace the co-existences and successions of phenomena, i. e. to trace the relation of cause and effect throughout the universe submitted to our inspection.*" In other words, what we have to do is to observe *facts*, and discover their *laws*; to this empirical process the whole sum of our knowledge is forever confined.

Against this summary species of sensationalism the whole of our previous reflections, we trust, have furnished many arguments; but we shall make now a few additional observations, more especially applicable to the work before us.

1. We cannot regard Mr. Lewes's own account of the true office of philosophy as consistent with its alleged futility. He admits that it has been the great impulse to human research, the parent of positive science, nourishing, sustaining, directing the human faculties in their infancy, and leading them to all that is great and noble. Can it, then, be rational to affirm that philosophy, having been the mainspring of all human improvement, yet now, exactly in this very age, having given birth to an Auguste Comte, is from henceforth to be thrown aside as utterly worthless, and chased out of all our seats of learning? The thought at once suggests itself, *Has its end been fully answered?* Can we call it the highest stretch of philosophy to produce a system of science

\* Vol. i. p. 16.

which formally denies the existence of a God? May not some more struggles be yet necessary, to bring the human mind to the appreciation of the true method of all mental investigation? Having achieved the true method of *physical* research, may it not yet be a higher triumph of philosophy to achieve that of metaphysical and spiritual research also? For the honor, the glory, the happiness of humanity, we hope that it may be so.

But on what ground is it asserted, that metaphysical science is futile—what the theory on which its long life and approaching death is explained? No other than this: that human knowledge passes through three stages; the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive; and that as each succeeding stage is gained, the ideas peculiar to the one preceding it are exploded. Now it is admitted by our author, that while some sciences have reached the positive stage, others are still on the metaphysical, and others again on the theological stand-point. *His* conclusion is, that as *physical* science has been freed from its supernatural and abstract form, *all* our knowledge is travelling on to the same result. Our conclusion is quite the reverse; namely, that as the supernatural, the metaphysical, and the positive, have all existed more or less in every age, and exist now as much as ever, they are real elements of truth, to which the progress of mind is gradually assigning their proper limits. Theology and philosophy still exist, and so they ever will as long as the human faculties remain what they are; never will positive science reach the height towards which the spiritual aspirations of man eternally tend, just in proportion as his rational and moral nature attains a loftier degree of purity and perfection.

2. But we are not yet prepared to grant that the peculiar problems of philosophy are so utterly hopeless, as our author makes them out. We do not regard his "irreversible canon" (that whatever relates to causes and essences, is entirely beyond our reach) as by any means so certain as he declares it. What is the universe around us? Is it merely a succession of phenomena? Does it either satisfy our reason or express our *whole* knowledge of the world to say, that all we can do is to observe and classify *appearances*? Unless we choose to plunge into the absolute idealism of Hegel, and only admit a universe of relations, we *must* suppose a real, substantial objective world; and to know that it *exists*, supposes a faculty which, to some extent or other, is cognizant of essences. So it is also with regard to *causes*. No empirical observations can give us the perception of *power*; but unless this is

cognized as a reality by our reason, the unity of the world to us is gone ; we can say nothing of a spiritual cause, we can never reach the valid conception of a God. Nay, if all ontology is denied, then our very personality can never be conceived of ; man cannot call himself an essence, he is but a succession of phenomena. The very same argument, in fact, by which the positive philosopher sweeps away the science of essence and cause, would likewise sweep away the science of phenomena also. How do we know the existence of substance and power ? By a certain subjective state of our faculties. How do we know aught of phenomena ? By another state equally subjective. Deny the validity of consciousness in the one case, as a voucher for objective reality, and what is to prevent my denying it in the other ?

We insist, therefore, upon a knowledge of the existence both of essences and causes, and in the knowledge of their existence there is a germ of thought which may be expanded into a valid metaphysic, or, if the term be preferred, a valid ontology.

3. Our author will now probably come with the inquiry, "Have you, then, any ideas independent of experience ; for on this the pretensions of metaphysics must be staked ?" I answer, What is experience ? What are its elements ? Unless we have some ideas independent of experience, how is experience possible ? Experience implies two elements—a *self* on the one side, an objective reality on the other. There must be an intuition of my own existence, there must be a subject to which the multiplicity of my ideas are referred as a primitive unity, else our consciousness would have no thread of connection running through it. Moreover, there must be certain forms by which the objective stimuli that act upon us are shaped into notions or ideas. Imagine the influences of the external world acting upon a perfectly formed human body, but tenanted by a mind without understanding or reason. These influences, it is admitted, would never convey knowledge to such a mind, because there would exist no faculties adapted to grasp them. But what does the existence of such faculties imply ? Evidently the power of attaching certain forms, shapes, or conceptions to external phenomena—the power of reducing them to notions, and of giving them a character by which they take their place as real elements of human knowledge existing in the understanding. In this sense, we assuredly *do* possess something independent of experience ; we possess, namely, those categories or forms of thought which give rise immediately to the primitive conceptions, under



which all external things are viewed. Without this *a priori* element, experience itself would be impossible.\*

4. We come to another point which appears to us to stand in a very unsatisfactory light in the work before us, and that is the ground-principle of religion. The author, on this subject, comes forth with one of his sweeping "*fallaciæ plurium interrogationum*," in the following words: "Upon what does religion base itself? Upon reason or revelation? What do the Fathers teach? What do all the highest theological authorities teach? The question is pertinent, important. Do they teach, that human reason is competent to solve the problems of religion? Do they teach, that to reason man must look for certitude and conviction? No: they one and all energetically declare, as they are forced to declare, that reason is essentially a finite, limited, erring faculty, wholly incompetent to produce certitude and conviction." To this he adds in a note: "It would be idle to cite authorities for this fundamental and universally acknowledged position. We should be ashamed of alluding to it, did not the present discussion force us."† Now we imagine it would be more *difficult* to cite high authorities for this position than *idle*, if we understand it aright. What does it imply? It cannot mean simply that reason is incompetent to deduce *all* which faith reveals; for this view of the case would make nothing for the purpose which the author has before him, that of showing the *entire* separation of religion and philosophy. If it means, then, to assert that *all* religion bases itself upon revelation, or that the Fathers taught any such doctrine as this, we altogether deny it. Many of the Fathers built their theological notions, even too much, upon philosophical dogmas; and the *great mass* of theological authority, both in ancient and modern times, teaches us to base revealed religion upon the broader principles of natural religion. All the great systems of theology that the Church has produced, all at least which have any pretensions to merit, proceed distinctly upon this principle. And correctly so. How the existence of a God could possibly be revealed to us by inspiration or authority, is a problem which has never yet been solved. All revelation proceeds upon the *fact* of his existence, and we know not where this fact could ever find a valid basis, were it disowned as a primary conclusion of our reason and conscience. This brings us,

\* We must refer the reader here to what has already been said upon this point in our examination of the two foregoing writers;—especially to the difference between the sensation of a thing and the notion of it.

† Vol. iv. p. 43.

*See also H. Hamilton  
on the Regulative Faculty  
of the Intellect.*



then, to the very point in question. Can positive science, in the sense here employed, ever bring us to the conviction of the Being of a God? M. Comte says authoritatively *it cannot*, and we believe him to be right. Far are we from attributing this sentiment to those who advocate the positive principle, since there is nothing more unjust than to draw our own conclusions, and then force them upon other people; but we cannot see how the atheistic conclusion, into which the master openly sinks, can ultimately be avoided by the pupils. If all we can do is to observe phenomena and deduce their laws, if all inquiry both into causes and essences is entirely beyond our reach, we are quite at a loss to see how the belief in a God can be any other than what Comte represents it, namely, a delusion incident to the more infantile state of humanity. We contend, then, for a philosophy of religion. We affirm that the grounds of our religious belief, and the facts of our spiritual nature, can be subjected to philosophical investigation, as well as any other part of our mental phenomena. We believe that the history of every mind, if it be closely examined, and the history of humanity in the mass, all tend to prove some connection with a spiritual world, without which *man* were a problem utterly inexplicable; and we look with jealous eye upon any system which tends to absorb the notions of the human spirit or the Infinite Spirit in that of nature, to cut us off from that which gives us all our dignity, and lends to human action all its grandeur and elevation.

5. We only add a single idea respecting the distinction which is drawn in the work before us, between philosophy and positive science, on the ground of one being progressive, the other not. The author ought to have admitted that philosophy is progressive on his own hypothesis; for by his own showing it has gradually evolved the true principles of human knowledge. The fact which is so much dwelt upon, that the same questions come over and over again, and are ever unsolved, is nothing to the purpose. In all sciences, even those of a purely positive character, the great ultimate points aimed at are stated in the outset; but the circumstance of their not being solved is no argument to prove that progress is not made in them. Physiology aims at the discovery of the principle of life; chemistry of the ultimate elements of nature; politics at the *best possible* form of government. These problems recur ever and anon; they are ever solving and never solved; but truth comes out in the very process. So it is in philosophy. The great ultimate problems have been stated, and re-stated, and never solved;

but let the progress of human intelligence, the marking out of the boundaries of human knowledge, the whole intellectual phenomena of man's history, say, whether there has not been a steady advancement towards the elucidation of the great questions of man's nature and destiny. Indeed, the argument from the fixed nature of metaphysical ideas, may be viewed as tending exactly the contrary way from what is here intended. What does the perpetual advance of positive science prove, but its errors or imperfections? What does the fixedness of metaphysical ideas prove, but their absolute and necessary truth? For our own part, we believe fully and heartily in philosophy; we regard it as the truest expression of the thought of every age; as one of the greatest aids to human progress; and, when of a true, elevated, and spiritual kind, as one of the most efficient means by which man is ever recalled from his absorption in the material, to the contemplation of truth, of immortality, and of God.

We might just mention, before concluding this part of the section, that there have been many pleasing, though by no means profound writers, who have from time to time grounded upon these sensational principles, valuable works of a practical kind, adapted more especially to guide us aright in estimating the influence of circumstances over the human mind. As a specimen of these, I might mention Dr. Henry M'Cormac's volume entitled "The Philosophy of Human Nature in its Physical, Intellectual, and Moral relations." We find here the same theory of causation assumed, that we have already noticed; the same dogma respecting the origin of our ideas, the same fundamental principle respecting the nature of the moral faculty as arising from experience and association, all asserted, and reasoned upon, with only the very feeblest attempt at analyzing and proving them. Notwithstanding this, however, the work is practically a useful one for general readers, and points out many facts in the constitution of man, which it is highly beneficial for us both to observe and act upon.

As a whole, then, we might say that this school of philosophy has borne much good fruit in its own peculiar department; for although it is by no means adapted to cultivate the deeper religious feelings, or to raise the mind to enthusiasm in the pursuit either of the beautiful or the good, yet it is well calculated to point out the mental action and reaction of mind and matter, of the man, and the outward world, upon each other, and thus to advance that species of education which consists in so adapting our circumstances, as

to aid us in our intellectual advancement, and in the performance of our moral duties. All the varied systems we shall bring under review, are, in fact, but pulsations of the great mind of humanity. They are all based upon some true idea, and each takes up some one department, which, owing to the concentration of mind upon it thus produced, is analyzed far more completely than could otherwise have been the case. The defect which one system labors under is soon supplied by the exertions of another, and the next age reaps the fruit, which they have both conspired to produce and to mature. We come now to consider the class of philosophers which we have termed

(B) SENSATIONAL MORALISTS.

Although ethics do not, generally speaking, afford so much scope for speculative philosophy as those branches of mental analysis, to which we have just referred, yet it would occasion a considerable blank in our historical survey, were we to pass by the attempts which have been made to philosophize on man's moral and practical life. That moral systems should be founded upon sensational principles is, perhaps, less to be wondered at, than that such principles should be employed in explaining the more complex phenomena of our intellectual being. Our *actions* are external, and refer for the most part to some or other of our outward circumstances; hence, probably, arises the great tendency there is, to make the whole science of ethics turn upon outward laws or relationships, rather than upon any of our inward feelings or conceptions, to make it a system of rules, rather than the acting out of an absolute idea. On this account, we consider it a matter of great importance, to show how our moral sentiments spring from that true and incontrovertible source, which exists in the primary elements of our constitution.

In studying moral philosophy *speculatively*, there are two different methods in which we may commence and carry on our investigations. *First*, we may begin by the study of *actions*, analyzing their qualities, and attempting to discover what it is which gives them the peculiarity, that we designate by the word *moral*; or, *secondly*, we may begin by studying our inward emotions, and endeavor from thence to detect the precise nature and ground of the moral feelings. In the one case we seek to answer the question, What is virtue? in the other, What is conscience? The former

of these processes we may term the objective, the latter the subjective method ; and we shall have ere long to point out two distinct schools of sensational moralists, which have followed respectively each of these two methods in their philosophical speculations.

The influence of sensational principles upon both methods is at once obvious. First, consider their bearing upon the discussion, which has taken place, respecting the qualities of actions. One philosopher affirms, that by the exercise of his higher or rational faculty, he perceives in action certain moral distinctions, which are quite separate from any immediate tendency they may have to produce pleasure or pain ; while another contends that we possess a moral sense, which distinguishes ethical properties in actions, just as the natural senses distinguish material properties in objects. To the sensationalist, however, both these theories are totally inadmissible. As to our reason, he would argue, it can do nothing more than work up the matter which experience affords, and therefore, can discover no qualities distinct from those which come to us through the channels of sensation ; and as to the moral sense, it cannot be generically different from natural sense or sensation, but, like all other emotions, is merely a particular form in which the latter is found to exist. Actions, therefore, morally speaking, can have only one set of qualities when viewed by the light of sensationalism, namely, those, by virtue of which we receive profit or loss, pleasure or pain, joy or sorrow.

Again, if we look to the subjective side of the question, it is equally evident, that, in studying the *moral faculty*, sensationalism at once puts its veto upon any theory, that implies the spontaneous action of the human mind ; that it makes every impulse come from without ; and that when carried to its legitimate conclusion, it merges human liberty entirely in an iron fate, consequent upon the supremacy of external circumstances. We shall now, therefore, briefly trace the influence of sensational principles upon these two phases of ethical philosophy, as exhibited in our own country during the present century.

I. We begin with the *objective sensational ethics* of the present age, the great inquiry of which is, into the nature and grounds of *virtue* externally considered. Locke, it is well known, in his zeal to oppose the doctrine of innate ideas, denied the existence of any original or innate practical principles, by which human action is governed ; a conclusion against which Lord Shaftesbury and others very warmly protested. Notwithstanding this protest, Dr. Thomas



Rutherford, following out the moral aspect of Locke's philosophy, soon worked it up into a defence of utilitarianism. With this view of the ground of moral relations David Hume coincided, and also, among English writers, Abraham Tucker, an especial admirer and follower of Locke. To these writers succeeded Archdeacon Paley, who published his work on *Moral Philosophy*\* in the year 1785—a work which from that period to the present has held the most distinguished place in *one* of the English universities at least, and has been extensively read and admired throughout the country. The utilitarian scheme of Paley, then, we may consider as the ethical phase of Locke's philosophy, which has principally occupied the public attention during the nineteenth century.

Paley's definition of virtue is well known to every moralist. He makes it "the doing good to mankind in obedience to the will of God for the sake of eternal happiness."† The will of God then is here stated as the most direct *rule* of morality which we possess. To find the *ground* of it we have only to ask what is the ground of that will? The ground of it, argues Paley, can be no other than the production of happiness to the creature, since we cannot conceive of God operating otherwise than benevolently.‡ We may consider, therefore, the utility of an action to be the ultimate foundation of its moral excellence, and the test by which we know it to be in consonance with the Divine purpose.§ This mode of stating the matter, as it appears to us, virtually begs the whole question. The possible motives of the Divine operation are all summed up in a single disjunctive syllogism—God must act malignantly, benevolently, or indifferently; but he cannot act malignantly or indifferently, therefore he must act benevolently. Undoubtedly, God ever acts benevolently; but does this syllogism exhaust the possible motives of the Divine operation? Far from it. There is yet room for us to imagine an infinite number of grounds in the depths of the Divine nature, from which the operations of Deity may originate. Why might we not as well argue, that God must operate according to right, or according to wrong, or indifferently to both—but he cannot act wrongly or indifferently; consequently he must according to *right*, and *that* must be to us the ground of virtue. These kind of arguments, in fact, bring us no nearer to the

\* "Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy." Dedicated to Edmund Law, D. D., Bishop of Carlisle.

† Book I. chap. vii. paragraph the first.

‡ Book II. chap. v.

§ Ibid. chap. vi.

real analysis of the subject in hand ; they beg the question in the very terms employed.

Without making any further specific remarks, however, upon Paley, we shall proceed to offer a few observations upon utilitarianism itself, as an ethical system.

1. We affirm that utility could never be practically applied, as a safe and sufficient *rule* of human action. For on the supposition that our actions are to be estimated and directed by their expediency, who, we ask, is to estimate or direct them ? The consequences of every action we perform, are either wholly or to a great extent unknown to us ; they go on multiplying by the laws of our moral and intellectual nature far beyond the possibility of human sagacity to calculate ; so that if we had to value each action according to this rule, it would be impossible ever to know, with any approach to certainty, how much virtue or how much vice it really contained, how far it was morally right or how far morally wrong. Paley, though a utilitarian, saw clearly that utility would not serve as a *rule* of conduct, and took refuge from its uncertainty in the will of God. However acutely, therefore, it might be argued that utility is the *ground* of morality, and imparts to all actions the peculiar qualities which we attach to them as good or evil, still it is quite clear that we need some safer principle by which our practical life may be directed. Unless such a principle be afforded us, we may commit the greatest errors in morality, while our intentions may have been perfectly sound and healthy.

To this argument it is by no means sufficient to answer, that utility is not to be estimated by the sagacity of any individual mind, but rather by the combined and general result of human experience, from which the rule of life will be an induction ; for this general experience is not applicable to the vast majority of individual actions at all, and if it were so, is still far too fluctuating to serve for an absolute and imperative law. If men were to act on their own ideas of utility, we should have an infinity of moral laws, varying with their relative sagacity or folly ; if they were to act on the general idea of utility, then we should find moral distinctions varying in every country, and with every different state of society. Utility, then, cannot be the universal *rule* of moral action ; we go on further to show that it can neither be the *ground* of it. To show this, we affirm,

2. That the argument drawn from the fact, that utility in the case of inanimate or involuntary agents never produces in us the slight-

est degree of moral approbation has never, as far as we are aware, been fully and satisfactorily answered. If utility were the whole foundation of moral distinctions, assuredly we ought to denominate everything virtuous which is in any way beneficial. On the contrary, the very fact that the notion of intelligence and will are to be *subjoined* before we can possibly regard utility as synonymous with morality, is a proof that something else is needed, ere we can account for the whole of what is contained in the notion of virtue. The argumentation may be briefly put as follows. If an agent is accounted virtuous simply because he subserves the general well-being, then a valuable machine, which confers great blessings upon society, is virtuous. By no means, replies the utilitarian; a machine is not an intelligent or a voluntary being at all, and hence stands altogether without the limits of moral agency. On your own showing, then, we rejoin, there must be something or other in an action besides its mere utility, something implied in the idea of free agency and intelligence which gives it its moral character; and it is *that something* which we contend for as an element that altogether destroys the system of mere expediency, which we are now considering.

3. This will be more clearly seen, when we consider that moral distinctions, if we trace them to their origin, do not apply directly to actions at all, but only to their motives. Our moral estimate of every action, purposed by a sound mind, is regulated entirely by the view we take of the *intention* from which it springs. Many an act which is really useful is stamped by us as immoral, the very moment we perceive that the *design* of it was *evil*; and many an act fraught with mischief and calamity is not only passed by uncensured, but is even applauded as virtuous, so soon as we distinctly perceive that it was done with a good intention. On the very same principle, one and the same action is often regarded as moral to-day and immoral to-morrow; not because we have discovered in the meantime any difference in its *tendency*, but because we have fresh light thrown upon the motive from which it sprang.

Observe, then, how the moral aspect of an action must be judged of, on the principle, that its excellence or turpitude arises out of the motive it springs from. If we define a *motive* to be that, which immediately precedes and leads to effort, it is evident, that it cannot be anything external, but must consist in a particular state of feeling or emotion, since it is from this alone that action or effort can directly flow. A *moral* motive, accordingly, in opposition to

an instinctive one, will be a state of feeling, which includes in it intelligence and design, since we always carefully exclude from the appellation of virtuous, those acts which result from our purely instinctive or pathological affections. To estimate, then, the true morality of an action, instead of first looking to its direct tendency, respecting which we may be altogether deceived, we must follow it up to the motive from which it originated; this motive we must ascertain to be a state of feeling not pathological merely, but involving intelligence and design; and, lastly, we must perceive that the *design* itself is in accordance with our nature and destiny as accountable creatures. If this be an accurate analysis, the foundation-stone of morals is the great ruling law of our nature, by virtue of which we are impelled to the accomplishment of our destiny; which law, moreover, is but an expression both of the will and the nature of God. Upon everything which God has created around us, a law is visibly impressed, by which it has to fulfil its design; our law is that engraven upon the conscience, and embodied in the dictates of our moral nature. Here we have at once a sure ground of morality, and a valid rule by which to direct all our practical life. Such an account of our actions, morally considered, it is needless to say, is quite incompatible with the doctrine of utility; not but that the great moral law may ultimately coincide with what is expedient, but still, as far as man is concerned, the law itself, as an expression of the Divine will and the Divine nature, must be regarded as the foundation of virtue; expediency can only be used at the very furthest as the test of it.

4. The most decisive ground of appeal, however, on all questions of this nature, is that of the human consciousness. Fundamental truths of our spiritual being cannot be *proved*; they must ultimately rest upon the natural history of the human mind, observed and investigated on the principle of all inductive philosophy. Is there, then, or is there not, in the human mind, an intuitive perception of duty or propriety, distinct from any calculations of profit and loss? Is there, or is there not, a feeling of approbation in the consciousness of having complied with duty, quite irrespective of the benefit which may accrue to ourselves or to any one else; and is there, or is there not, a feeling of self-condemnation or remorse when duty has been set at nought, although no injury may have been inflicted? We answer, there is no language of civilized men, in which the most unequivocal terms expressive of such facts of our moral nature are not found in abun-



dance, and none in which they do not stand quite distinct from the phraseology, by which men express their notions of the injurious and the useful. To describe, in poetic language, the beauty of individual actions, which have all the marks of disinterested virtue about them, does not suit the closer and more severely philosophical style which it is our aim here to preserve ; the whole *argument*, however, is contained in this one sentiment—that if we investigate the facts of our own consciousness, or examine the words and actions of mankind at large, as evidences of their inward perceptions and feelings, we shall discover a class of moral emotions, which are excited by the contemplation simply of *right motives*, and that too before the slightest judgment is passed upon the utility of the action, to which such motives gave birth.

Against this conclusion it is but idle speculation to inquire, whether a savage brought up in the woods and forests would manifest certain moral sensibilities at the sight of a detestable action.\* It is no more possible to argue correctly respecting our moral faculties from such a case, than it is to argue correctly respecting man's intellectual powers from the most degraded of our species, or to conclude, that because the human frame does not manifest certain physical powers, when sickly and decrepit, that therefore it cannot possess them in ordinary circumstances favorable to its full development. Paley, it is true, though employing fallacious arguments of this kind, yet gave a higher tone to his moral system, than Hume had done before him, by presenting the nobler motives to virtue, which we derive from the hope of everlasting happiness ; but still all the objections we have pointed out, we cannot but think, are opposed to the doctrine of utility as a *principle*, whether we take it in its wider or more contracted extent.

From the foregoing remarks, then, we conclude that utility can never give an unerring *rule* for the guidance of human actions ; that it passes by all consideration of right or wrong *motives* in the estimate of human conduct ; that it takes no account whatever of our moral *dispositions* ; that it fails to explain the facts of our *consciousness* ; and is consequently wholly insufficient as a theory to satisfy the phenomena of our moral life.

But we come now to notice another form, which the utilitarian principle has taken, and in which it has excited no little attention in our own country, as well as on the Continent of Europe,—I

\* This is the method proposed by Paley, for testing the reality of a moral sense. See "Moral and Political Philosophy," Book I. chap. v.

refer to the philosophy of Bentham. Jeremy Bentham was born in London, in the year 1748, and at a very early age became a graduate of the university of Oxford. Whilst there he directed his attention to the study of law and the cognate branch of ethics, and during the last year of his stay in that city became an ardent admirer and investigator of the principle of utility, chiefly from reading the Essay of Dr. Priestley upon Government. In 1776 he published a "Fragment on Government," and in 1789 appeared his grand work, entitled, "Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation." The moral system which Bentham advocated in this latter work, and which he expanded more and more during a long and laborious life, at length came forth in the year 1834, in its most complete, and at the same time most popular form, as a posthumous production, edited by Dr. Bowring, under the name of "Deontology."

The account of Bentham's proceedings in the development of his principles is given by his editor in the following terms:—"It was in the year 1789 that the 'Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation' appeared. Here, for the first time, are pains and pleasures separately defined, and regularly grouped; and the classification and definition of them is so complete for all ordinary purposes of moral and legislative investigation, that Mr. Bentham, in after life, found little to modify or to add to in the list. By the side of the pains and the pleasures, the corresponding motives are brought to view, and a clear and determinate idea attached to the springs of action by showing their separate operation. And, moreover, the author uncovers and sifts that phraseology which has done so much mischief in the field of right and wrong by the judgment of *motives*, instead of the judgment of conduct, so that the same motive is frequently spoken of in terms opposed to and incompatible with one another. \* \* \* In the later years, however, of Mr. Bentham's life, he was far from deeming his analysis complete. He had not taken man's interests and man's desires into his list, and he employed the phraseology of utility instead of that of happiness."\*

In the year 1810, it appears, Bentham published his "Chrestomathia," the object of which was to show in what manner all the various arts and sciences contribute to the production of human happiness. In 1817 appeared "The Table of the Springs of Action," in which the phraseology of utilitarianism is still retained, although the author was evidently working his moral system into

\* "Deontology," Vol. I. p. 311.

a more close and definite form. Becoming now, however, dissatisfied with the term utility, as expressive of the groundwork of morality, he cast about for an expression which should convey his notion on the subject without the possibility of creating error or equivocation. Once he thought of proposing the term eudaimonology, again he employed the word felicitism, until at length, in the year 1822, in his "Codification Proposal," he decided on terming his moral theory "the greatest-happiness principle," and to represent the practice of virtue as the art of maximizing happiness. It is the complete exposition of this principle in its last and most improved phraseology, that forms the object of the work called "Deontology," to which we have just alluded.\*

The principles advocated under the name of Deontology may be easily explained. The whole system takes its rise from the consideration, that man is capable of pleasures and pains, and that, from the calculation of these, all moral action proceeds. On this theory, good is a word synonymous with pleasure, evil synonymous with pain, and all happiness consists in the possession of the one, and the absence of the other. Give me, says the utilitarian teacher, give me the human sensibilities—joy and grief, pain and pleasure, and I will create a moral world.† Pleasure and pain, then, the basis of our moral nature, are to be estimated according to their magnitude and extent; *magnitude*, referring to their intensity and duration; *extent*, depending on the number of persons who are affected by them. It is in the proper balancing of these, asserts Bentham, that all morality consists, and beyond this the words virtue and vice are emptiness and folly.‡

Pleasure or pain, however, may arise from two sources; it may arise from considerations affecting ourselves, or it may arise from the contemplation of *others*, the former being purely of a selfish nature, the latter being sympathetic.§ Hence originates a two-fold division of virtue into prudence and effective benevolence—both of them, however, alike having their ground in the pleasure we personally derive from their exercise. Prudence, again, is of two kinds, that which respects ourselves, which our author terms self-regarding prudence; and that which respects others, which he terms extra-regarding prudence. Effective benevolence, also, is

\* See Dr. Bowring's History of the greatest-happiness principle, appended to the first volume of the "Deontology."

† Deontology, chap. i. and ii., in which the basis of the principle is explained, in a most amusing and caustic style.

‡ For an equally amusing history of the word "Virtue," consult chap. x.

§ Vol. ii. Introduction.

twofold, positive and negative ; the business of the former being to augment pleasure by voluntary exertion, that of the latter being to do the same by *abstaining* from action.\* Virtue, says Bentham, when separated from the pursuit of happiness, is absolutely nothing ; and, accordingly, it is termed by him a fictitious entity.† Inasmuch, also, as no one is supposed to have any motive for action different from the pursuit of pleasure or the avoidance of pain, we have the deontological doctrine educed, that every motive is abstractedly good, and that evil has to do with nothing but our actions or dispositions. In a word, we are to imagine, that man has originally no moral sentiment whatever, that he has no idea of one thing being right and another wrong, that all actions are to him in this respect absolutely alike, and that the conception of virtue, as well as the rules of morality, are all the product of experience, teaching us what actions produce happiness, and what suffering. Such is the moral system, which is aptly enough termed the greatest-happiness principle, and such the virtue which is correctly expressed as the art of maximizing our enjoyment.

The style of the work from which I have made the above analysis is popular, witty, and somewhat amusing, but becomes at length tedious from repetition and tautology. It abounds in biting sarcasm against what is termed the dogmatism and "*ipse-dixitism*" of most other moralists ; but, what is remarkable, is itself at the same time one of the most striking instances of reiterated *assertion* that is to be found among all the ethical writings of the present century.‡

Now, in offering some remarks upon Bentham's philosophy, we must state distinctly, that we leave entirely out of the question his valuable labors in the department of jurisprudence, and refer simply to the principles of his moral theory. And here we would caution every ethical student against imagining, that he will find all the originality, which is claimed for the deontologist by himself and his more ardent admirers. To speak of Bentham's "having found out the true psychological law of our nature, as Newton discovered that of the material universe," is not only metaphysically false, but, even allowing its philosophical accuracy, is *historically* untrue. To say nothing of the Epicureans of ancient times, and more recently of Hobbes, we might point out many writers, who have given far more than passing allusions to the very same doc-

\* These results comprise the whole scope of the second volume of the "Deontology."

† Vol. i. chap. x.

‡ Bentham's most scientific work was his "Introduction to Morals and Legislation."



trine as that for which Bentham is so highly extolled, although they may not have expanded it so fully, or applied it so extensively, as was done in the case before us.\* The professed supporters of utility, again, such as Hume and Paley, proceeded virtually upon the very same principle; and even if we pass over these, yet still we might refer to Gay's preface to Archbishop King "On the Origin of Evil," to the writings of Priestley, to the "Political Justice" of Godwin, and to many of the French moralists, for illustrations of the very same theory, which Bentham only somewhat more perseveringly elaborated. The greatest-happiness principle is, in fact, utilitarianism in one of its many different phases; and accordingly the objections, which we have already urged against that doctrine, apply with equal force to the one now before us. As the question, however, is of some importance, we shall specify a few other objections, which apply more directly to the utilitarian system, as held by the advocates of deontology; and,

1. There is in these writers a perpetual habit of confounding the *cause* of virtuous action with the *effect*. We have it reiterated again and again as an unanswerable argument, that there must be a selfish pleasure experienced whenever we act on virtuous principles: for, if our action terminates in ourselves, it must arise from the prospect of our own happiness and advantage; if, on the other hand, we act for the welfare of others, still, we are told, it is only for the satisfaction of our own impulses that we seek to benefit them. Now, that there is pleasure attached to moral action, whether it be self-seeking or extra-seeking, we readily admit, but this is far from giving us a proof that such action *springs from any anticipation of the pleasure we hope to obtain*. It is a pleasure to a strong man to exercise his limbs, but this is no evidence that he cannot have any other motive than this for exercising them. To a man devoted to business it is a pleasure to be perpetually absorbed in it, but still his activity may have many other grounds of excitement besides that one. Prove as you may, that pleasure actually accompanies, and even that we *expect* it to accompany the practice of every virtue, the point is still far from being settled that there is no other spring of virtuous action in existence. The Deity, assuredly, may have given us a moral law, may have engraved it on our own minds, and placed it far beyond

\* The only difference between Epicurus or Hobbes on the one side, and Bentham on the other, is, that the former drew their principles at once from human nature metaphysically considered—while the latter gave no theory of man generally, but laid down his moral axioms as ultimate facts.

all the chances of human calculation; and yet may have attached pleasure to the obedience of it as a mark of his approval, and as a reward for our fidelity. The mere fact, therefore, that we always look for happiness to accompany virtuous action, does not at all prove that happiness is the ground of its moral excellence. This is confirmed when we consider,

2. That, upon investigating the moral phenomena of our minds, we find a class of affections, which rise in their real worth just in proportion to their *disinterestedness*. If personal pleasure were the ground of virtue, then every affection ought to be esteemed higher in the scale of morality, in proportion as it tends more directly to *self* as its object. Just the contrary is the case. The more our own individual interests are sacrificed in the pursuit of another's welfare, the higher rises the scale of virtue from which such conduct proceeds. If it be said that we sacrifice our own interests, because the pleasure of satisfying our benevolent feelings more than counterbalances the loss we sustain; we reply, that this only exhibits the vast strength of our purely disinterested affections, and affords no proof that, because they give us pleasure in their exercise, therefore they must be selfish in their origin. Only show in one single instance, that the direct end of an action is for the sake of another to the sacrifice of ourselves, and the fact that we have a moral satisfaction in its performance, does not in the slightest degree shake its purely unselfish character.

3. We appeal to the evidence of our higher reason, as a testimony against this peculiar form of utilitarian morality. If virtue be a mere calculation of consequences, there can be no such thing as *moral philosophy*, strictly so called. The very idea of *philosophy*, or *science*, implies the existence of absolute or unalterable truth, not only that which is, but that which *must* be. Mathematical science investigates the unalterable relations of space and number; metaphysical science, the unalterable foundations of truth in general. What, we ask, can moral science investigate, unless it be the unalterable facts and principles of morality, both in themselves and in their relation to us.

That there are certain *fixed* relations between man's moral sensibilities and outward actions, is a fact resting upon the evidence of our consciousness; and it is to these eternal relations that we direct our inquiries, when we seek to lay the groundwork of a moral philosophy. Very different, however, is our employment when we are merely engaged in calculating for our future happiness, with

pleasures and pains as our ciphers. What is a pleasure to one man is often a pain to another ; that which offers to me satisfaction, presents, perhaps, a prospect of nought but misery to you ; so that moral relations on this principle must be as uncertain and variable as are the temperaments or idiosyncrasies of individual minds. There need to be on the deontological system a separate moral scale for every man ; nay, we ought all to revise our own moral principles every year or two, to see whether that which was a pleasure to us some time ago may not now have become an object of dissatisfaction : whether, therefore, that which was virtue has not now become vice. Our reason, we contend, in opposition to this, forces us to form certain primary and fundamental moral judgments, just as much as it necessitates the existence of our primary beliefs with regard to the external world, or to the fact of an exertion of power in the production of every effect, or to the axioms which lie at the foundation of all mathematical reasoning. It is just as impossible for me practically to deny the obligation of justice, as it is to deny that the world exists, or that a whole is greater than a part. The one as well as the other rests upon the primary and undeniable facts of our own unchangeable consciousness,—facts which, though they may be disputed in theory, can never be denied in practice. That a philosophical dreamer may run his head against the wall on the score of his idealism, we do not dispute ; nor do we doubt, but that in the case of moral obliquity, where the consequences of the folly are not so immediate, men may be found to reject the fundamental axioms of moral obligation ; but in the healthy understandings of the mass of mankind, the one judgment is just as plainly developed as the other. Moral philosophy then, *as philosophy*, is annihilated, when once we admit the theory before us ; the whole question is taken out of the region of scientific truth, and reduced simply to the calculations of individual sagacity.

4. There is a secret *petitio principii* at the very foundation of all utilitarian reasoning, like that of Bentham. Every man, it is affirmed, *ought* to seek the greatest happiness of the greatest number, as the fundamental principle of his actions in the world. But why *ought* he to do so ? On what ground can it be shown, that I am bound to seek the welfare of myself or my fellow-creatures, if there is no such thing as moral obligation ? If it *pleases* me more to inflict misery upon mankind, why am I not just as virtuous an agent in doing so, as if I please myself by producing their happiness ? The greatest-happiness principle itself must, in fact,

rest upon the pedestal of moral obligation, otherwise there is no means of enforcing it as the true principle of action, either in our social or our political relations. Take away that firm resting-place which is afforded by the notion of duty, and expressed in the word *ought*, and we may sink from one position down to another, without ever reaching a solid basis on which we may plant our feet, and lay the first stone of a moral superstructure. That this is really the case, is half acknowledged by the followers of Bentham, who are now visibly shrinking from the extreme view he has taken of utilitarianism, and seeking to *include* the idea of moral approbation, in order to give their doctrine some degree of strength and consistency.

5. Into the political consequences of this system we shall not allow ourselves to enter at any length: one thing, however, there is, of which we would remind those who hold up the excellence of Bentham's political writings, as a proof of the soundness of his ethical system; we mean, the fact that Hobbes, with a logic equally, if not more severe, deduced from the very same fundamental principles the propriety of all government being grounded on absolute despotism, as the form best suited to the wants of human nature. That Bentham was so successful on the subject of jurisprudence, arose, we consider, from his giving up the strict view of the selfish system with which he started, and following the dictates of common sense and of a benevolence, which were most consonant with his own disposition, than they were with his moral theory.

Moreover, there is a fundamental distinction between the principles of legislation and those of private morality, which should never be lost sight of. The former principles *suppose* the existence of the latter, and must proceed in strict accordance with them, whether it appear a matter of policy to do so or not. The object of the jurist is, simply to take men with their moral feelings as they are, already fixed and determined, and so to direct their actions, as to bring about the greatest welfare of the community. Morality says, "*Fiat justitia ruat cælum*;" jurisprudence points out *in what way* justice is to be done, so as to tend to the happiness of the whole nation. The one gives the absolute rule of action, the other only directs the details for social purposes. Moral law is immediately from God; political law, though springing from moral principles, is an adaptation of man;—the one is a code written upon the tablet of the human heart; the other, a code written in the statute book of the empire, conformable, indeed, to moral law, but compiled for



social utility. To morality, as a science, the utilitarian ground is entirely destructive, altering its universal and necessary aspect; in politics, utility, directed by moral precept, must be a chief element in every enactment. Bentham, looking at the subject with the eye of a jurist, by degrees became blind to everything but the utilitarian element—an error which, while only partially dangerous in legislation, is to the moralist fatal and deceptive from the very first step.

That Bentham was a great man, a courageous man, and in many respects a benevolent man, we believe all must be ready to admit; still, we cannot but think, that he neither read enough to disabuse his mind of many a cherished notion, which a wider range of investigation would have exploded, nor ever cultivated enough that steady reflective habit of mind which evolves truth from the observation of our inward consciousness, and reduces, by a close analysis, the admitted facts of human nature to their primary origin. With unexampled patience he developed the influence of pleasure and pain upon human actions; but a deeper philosophy would have pointed out, that these are but the accompaniments of virtue, while the law and the imperative to its obedience come from a surer and a far more exalted source. That source once discovered, he must soon have felt how threadbare a view of man's moral constitution his favorite greatest-happiness principle presents, how many of the noblest motives for virtue are entirely left out, and how much holier is the meaning attached to the word *duty*, than to merit the coarse and unphilosophical ridicule which he thought fit to pour out upon it.

I cannot better sum up these remarks on Bentham's "Deontology," than by adopting the language of an intelligent reviewer, who remarks—"What we maintain with regard to deontology is, that with dogmatic exclusiveness it endeavors to supersede every other view of virtue but its own, and even the high principle of duty itself. That in the estimates it presents of happiness and of virtue it takes no notice, and virtually excludes some of the most influential causes of happiness, and the highest objects of moral excellence: that in itself it tends to fix the mind on the lowest principles of action, and presents nothing to raise it towards the highest: that it is inconsistent in its principles, representations, and conclusions, with the established laws of human nature: that its statements are so little adjusted by moral wisdom, that they may often afford apparent justification for degrading vice; and

that by bringing the highest rules of duty to the test of a standard, with which they have little relation, their comprehensiveness and their dignity is lessened, and their direction limited and perverted. Were the deontology generally made the exclusive guide of life, degradation and evil must be the result.”\*

We have thus viewed the principal methods by which the objective question of moral philosophy (what is the ground of virtue?) has been answered by the adherents of the sensational school. The error we now see in each case, is that which lies at the foundation of all sensationalism, namely, the tendency to look without, and derive all truth from experience, to the entire neglect both of our inner consciousness, and of those notions of absolute truth which are as certain as they are indestructible.†

II. We come now to the consideration of the *subjective sensational ethics* of the present century.

The problem which moral philosophy, *subjectively* considered, endeavors to solve, is the following :—What is the faculty by which we become cognizant of virtue and vice, and what other faculties contribute to the perfection of our moral nature? According as the primary moral sentiment of the human mind has been referred to a judgment, or to an inward feeling, the names of intellectual theorists, or of emotional theorists, have been respectively awarded to the two corresponding classes of speculators. The idea of a *moral sense*, that is, of a peculiar and original emotion, by which we are led to the exercise of moral approbation or disapprobation, is altogether rejected by sensationalism; since, in that case, there would be at least one subjective tendency in the human mind, which does not come from an empirical source. Equally incompatible, on the other hand, with sensational principles, is the theory of a *primitive moral judgment*, by which we discern right and wrong in actions, and form the distinct conceptions of good and evil. If therefore, our moral sentiments arise neither from an implanted emotion or inward sense, nor from a primary judgment of our intellectual nature, the only possibility that remains is, that they are factitious, that they arise gradually by the aid of experience and the laws of association, and that they depend, therefore, like the rest of our empirical knowledge, simply upon the information of the external senses for their origin. Sensationalism, then, advocates the intellectual theory of morals, only in this subordinate

\* Christian Reformer, 1835.

† For an estimate of the Benthamites generally, see Sir James Mackintosh's "Dissertation."

sense ; virtuous action being a calculation grounded on the experience of pleasures and pains, of injury or utility. The arguments against this utilitarian view of the case we have already summed up, and need not, therefore, at present recount.

But now, in approaching the subjective side of moral philosophy, and attempting to explain the mental processes, upon which our moral life depends, there is a question of vast importance which meets us at the very outset, and that is the question of the liberty or necessity of the human will. According as this point is settled one way or the other, the whole succeeding inquiry will assume a very different aspect ; in fact, the sensational theory of responsibility is almost entirely built upon the doctrine of necessity, as its foundation.

The point here to be considered is *not* whether our actions are merely mechanical or otherwise ; *not* whether or no we have the power to act according to the determination of our will ; it is the prior question, whether the mind in exercising volition, can determine itself, or whether it is *necessarily* determined by motives. That we are conscious of voluntary *action*, as flowing from a determination or choice, in contradistinction to the purely mechanical functions of the frame, it is scarcely necessary to assert ; the only real question to be discussed is—How come we to our determinations ? What is it that puts the mind into the state of volition, from which certain acts or courses of action follow ?

Now, just in proportion as the fundamental idea of *self*, as finite cause, holds a prominent place in our philosophy, will there be a greater share assigned to it in the process, by which our volitions and dispositions are formed ; on the contrary, the greater be the tendency to absorb this idea in that of finite nature or of the infinite, so much the less will be the influence ascribed to our own personal power in the direction of our actions, and the moulding of our character. Pure subjective idealism makes self, or the will, within its own limits, omnipotent. Pure objective idealism, on the other hand, like that of Spinoza, by absorbing the individual self in the infinite substance, necessitates *absolute* fatalism : and, thirdly, pure sensationalism, which makes man simply one form of organized matter, must, in like manner, end in a fatalism equally complete, because, on this hypothesis, we must be subject absolutely to material laws, and become exactly what the outward circumstances we are placed in render us. This last theory, therefore, we term *circumstantial fatalism*.

Modified systems of philosophy, again, will present different features of liberty or necessity, according as any one of these three elements, SELF, NATURE, or GOD, prevails over the other two; those which refer most to God and to nature, upholding a modified, or, as it is termed, a *philosophical* idea of necessity; and those which refer most to the native powers and energies of the mind, maintaining the ordinary doctrine of free-will. A philosophical necessity, grounded on the idea of God's foreknowledge, has been supported by theologians of the Calvinistic school, more or less rigidly, throughout the whole of the present century. *Their* conclusions, however, have arisen more from dogmatic than from scientific considerations. On the other hand, philosophical necessity, grounded upon the influence of external nature, and the circumstances which surround us, has given a tone, and, more recently, a very decided one, to all the ethical writings of the sensational school.

We may comprehend the foregoing remarks in the following summary. Let *self*, *nature*, *Deity*, be three powers, the two former of course created, and allowed to exist by the last. If the power, self, is entirely uncontrolled, the result is pure subjective idealism. If it be entirely neutralized by Deity, the result is *religious* fatalism, if by nature it is *circumstantial* fatalism. Again, if self is only predominantly controlled, the result is philosophical necessity, whether the power opposed to it is that of Deity or of nature; and, lastly, if it control itself, subject to the subordinate influences of the other two powers, the result is termed free-will. From these representations it will be evident, that sensationalism in philosophy tends to uphold the doctrine of necessity, which will, of course, advance nearer and nearer to circumstantial fatalism in proportion as the sensational principles become more sweeping.

In sketching the history of sensationalism during the last century, we showed in what manner Hartley and Priestley drew the doctrine of philosophical necessity from their peculiar psychological principles. We may now add, that it is in a direct line from these acute authors, that all the subjective sensational ethics, which are now to be described, have regularly and connectedly flowed, so that we may regard all the necessarianism of the present age as the natural offspring of a sensational psychology. One of the most celebrated works in which the moral philosophy of this school was developed, is the well-known inquiry of Godwin concerning "Political Justice." Godwin might, indeed, have held in our



sketch a place with Paley and Bentham, as the uncompromising advocate of utilitarianism ; but his writings are equally celebrated for their defence of the doctrine of necessity, and the application of it both to private morality and political principles.

The publication of the "Political Justice" dates from the year 1793, and from that period down even to the present time, the moralists who have arisen from the school of Hartley, Priestley, and primarily of Locke, have in almost every instance advocated necessarian principles, based upon an exaggerated statement of the influence of external circumstances. To enumerate the mere names of writers who, during the present century, have treated the various topics of moral philosophy upon this necessarian hypothesis, (most of whom have drawn largely upon the works of Jonathan Edwards for their arguments,) would be both useless and tedious. The class, however, to which we allude, are those, beginning chronologically with Belsham, who published his "Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, and of Morality," in the year 1801, and coming down to Mr. Bray's work on the "Philosophy of Necessity," which appeared in the year 1841.

In glancing at the principles of the ethicosensational school, which fills up the interval between these two writers, I shall not confine myself to the statements of any particular authors, neither do I wish the reader to infer, that they all would admit the consequences which we may find to be included in their system. Most of them, indeed, so far from taking up the necessarian hypothesis, with a view of undermining the interests of true morality, have done so, as being, in their opinion, the only means of saving them. The advocates of free-will, it is known, on the contrary, have done the same ; and as in such cases it is natural to suspect, that there is a portion of truth on both sides of the question, we must attempt to ascertain the fundamental ideas upon which these writers proceed, and to find out the real point of discrepancy between them. The moral system of the sensational necessarians assumes for the most part the following aspect, which, for the sake of clearness, we shall concentrate into a few detached sentences.

Man is born without any moral principles, notions, or tendencies, whatever.\*

He has the capacity, however, of feeling pleasure or pain, which

\* Those of the class now under consideration, who adopt phrenology, take, of course, a different view of this point; but in other respects they generally coincide with what we here lay down.

arise either from this direct sensations, or from the satisfaction or non-satisfaction of his propensities.

That which produces pleasure is good, that which produces pain is evil.

Pleasure, when not actually enjoyed, but only in contemplation, is what we term *desire*, as pain in contemplation is *fear*, or aversion.

Desire, again, is synonymous with *will*; what we desire to possess is, all things considered, necessarily the object of volition.

We cannot ourselves determine, what sensations shall give us pleasure, or the reverse; consequently our will with regard to the seeking or production of them cannot be free.

With regard to our ideas, associations, and habits, it entirely depends upon our education, which shall be objects of desire, and which shall not.

Consequently, our desires, that is, our volitions, are absolutely and necessarily determined by *motives*, those motives arising either from our constitution or from our education.

As our actions follow our will, and the will follows the motives to which it is subjected, it is impossible that any man should act differently from what he really does under the same circumstances.

This is seen from the relation of cause and effect. Every volition must have a cause, and while the same causes exist the same effects must follow.

Moral causation is as sure and regular in its effects as physical.

On this alone is grounded the value and certainty of moral means, and from this alone results the real moral worth of every action; since action, without motive, can have no moral quality about it. So far the necessarian.

Now, in opposition to these principles, the libertarian denies that volition and desire are one and the same thing, or that the doctrine of causation applies to the determinations of voluntary agents *in the same sense* as it does to everything else; and he appeals to various facts of our nature in order to bear out this view. First of all, he appeals to *consciousness*, which if it does not subject us to perpetual deception, assures us every moment of our existence, that we are not *absolutely* under the power of motives, that we can follow one course or another as we may choose, that we might have chosen differently in the past, and that we may voluntarily mould our course for the future. Again, he appeals to the whole

aspect of practical life, showing that it is all based upon the notion of man's being a free agent; that it is not by necessity, for instance, that we build houses, construct engines, carry on business, or do anything else of the same nature. And, finally, he appeals to man's moral sentiments, and argues, that although motives may be necessary to the goodness or badness of an action, yet if those motives are supreme, the moral quality is entirely taken away from the agent, who can only justly incur approbation or disapprobation when he follows either a good or bad motive with the most perfect freedom of volition. Such is the *popular* view of these famous antagonistic opinions.

Now, in estimating these two systems, let us see, first, what the necessarian means by his doctrine of moral causation; whether, in fact, he means anything at all contradictory to the common notion of free agency. If all our volitions have an *objective* cause, (that is to say, a cause, not a part of, or dependent upon, ourselves,) which is certain and unalterable in its effects; then it is manifestly impossible to avoid the conclusion, that man is the subject of an *irresistible fate*. Every action, it is said, is the effect of a volition, but every volition is produced by a motive (or, in the language of necessity, a cause) over which we have no control; the inevitable conclusion is, that man is as much a machine under the effect of motives, as a steam engine is under the impulse of its moving power. *This conclusion, too, be it observed, applies to man's whole practical life*; if it be true at all, it must be true respecting the whole province of human action, because every possible action is the result of some volition, and every possible volition the result of some motive. The reasoner, therefore, who argues, that every *moral* or *immoral* action which a man commits is *necessary*, because certain motives have acted irresistibly upon him from without, must accept the full conclusion, that everything else in human life takes place by a like constraint; that by a similar *necessity* an agent makes clothes, or mends shoes, or builds houses, lights fires, cooks provisions, and does everything else, that depends upon our so called voluntary activity. The fatalism here involved cannot be met by the plea, that the agent in question placed himself in the way of circumstances, which have led him to this or that particular mode of life; for if he did so, it was by means of a volition that he did it, and that volition was determined by a previous motive. Neither can it be met by the plea, that he was induced by some other agent to follow one course of action or another; for

that agent, likewise, was the creature of fate. His will to prompt was determined by a like necessity; and the will previous to, and causative of that, was determined in the same manner; so that, beginning at any action of any voluntary agent, we may go back through a succession of causes, till we come to the great first cause, and thus evolve the idea that the whole of human actions are one chain of cause and effect absolutely fixed and determined from eternity, to eternity.

Now, the philosophical necessarian, we know, shrinks from *practically* accepting that conclusion. He will not admit an absolute and fixed necessity, but only a moral or philosophical one. Besides, he speaks largely of education, and the importance of remedial means, and the benefit of cultivating the intellectual powers and the moral feelings: moreover, he exhorts his fellow-men, on the very ground of his doctrine of moral causation, to get the sources of proper culture for themselves, and to put them into the hands of the people at large, as the only method of making them virtuous and happy. Astounding folly must all that be, if human things are not contingent; if they move in a chain of cause and effect from the eternity past to the eternity to come; and if all our actions are absolutely determined by what is entirely beyond our control. Exhortation and effort must be quite out of place if the whole sum and substance of human life is a necessary chain of this nature, for whatever we may *appear* to do of our own accord is, on this system, but the mockery of a liberty, which we seem to possess, but which practises upon us a complete and perpetual illusion. This extreme, then, we repeat, the philosophical necessarian avoids: he shrinks back from the abyss of fatalism, however strongly his principles may draw him to its brink.

If, then, the doctrine of necessity, thus modified by the term philosophical, does *not* mean that all human life is machinery, that it is a series of fixed results which can never be altered, it must admit, in some form and to some extent or other, *that man is the master and regulator of his own mind, and has sufficient control over his dispositions and actions either to render himself improvable, or to make himself a subject of blame when the means of improvement are neglected.* Whether improvement originate in ourselves, or in the influence of another, still it originates in *man*, and equally shows him to be in some sense a *source of moral action.*

Now let us look for a moment at the libertarian hypothesis, and



see wherein it differs from the foregoing. First and foremost, we find a certain power of self-determining volition asserted ; that is, as its opponents correctly show, the power of choosing without preference, or a choice without choice. The advocates of this self-determining power, with all their zeal, can never show any decisive cases in which we choose without being induced by a motive ; they are always obliged, for illustration, to have recourse to some altogether insignificant actions, (such as choosing one out of fifty shillings,) which cannot, in the nature of things, have any moral quality attached to them ; while in all the important movements of our life, those by which our character is estimated, it is perfectly evident that we do and must act under the influence of certain motives. The libertarian, in fact, when pushed hard by his opponent, is always obliged to concede the point, that motives not only have an influence upon us, but do really *determine* our choice in all the great practical affairs of human life, nay, that the existence of a motive is absolutely necessary to the moral quality of every action ; so that we must, after all, admit that man does not act ordinarily free from motives, but in strict accordance with them.

Now let us see in what consists the discrepancy between these two antagonist doctrines, when shorn of their respective anomalies. The necessarian, if he mean anything by prefixing the word *philosophical* to his favorite dogma, admits that man is *in some sense* a free agent ; that he forms plans, that he modifies character, that he acts upon design which he can carry out or suspend ; in one word, that he is all that the libertarian would contend for, *except* that his volitions are ever determined by the strongest motives, instead of determining themselves. On the other hand, the libertarian, when pressed for his proof of the self-determining power, is at a loss to find any decisive actions, in which this power exercises itself in opposition to, or irrespective of every kind of inducement. The only real point of dispute left, then, is this—how are we to reconcile that power of free and intelligent action, that capacity of design, that source of amelioration, or the reverse, which all admit to exist within ourselves, with the unquestionable fact, that we ever choose, and must choose under the influence of the strongest inducement ? In other words, how is our *freedom* of choice consistent with the *necessity* of acting from a motive ?

The whole of the difficulty we now see is traced up to the word

*motive*, and therefore it is in the analysis of this term that we must look for illumination. What, then, is a motive? Strictly speaking, it is *that which immediately precedes our determination to act*. That which immediately leads to such a determination, however, must evidently be an *emotion*, for it is granted on all hands, that emotions are the only active or impulsive principles of our nature. A motive, therefore, in the proper sense of the term, can be nothing else than the *mind itself in a certain state of feeling*; and in this view of the case there can be little difficulty in admitting, that every volition is determined by means of a motive, inasmuch as this is only another expression for the palpable fact just stated, that the mind in a state of emotion is the immediate antecedent of all human action. Necessarians are perpetually arguing as though motives were *objective* realities, whereas nothing objective can possibly have the least power in exciting us to action, until it is subjectively combined with some kind of emotional feeling. Such emotional feeling alone it is, which acts as a moving power upon the will.

We see, therefore, at once, if this be true, in what manner man, though under the necessity of acting in accordance with motives, is yet perfectly *free*. He cannot, it is true, alter the relation which God has instituted between emotions and volitions *generally*, inasmuch as that would be to alter the very laws of our constitution, but there are a thousand ways by which he modifies his own *states of feeling*, and through them, of course, his volitions also. The relation between emotion and volition stands on the same footing as that which exists between our perception of premises and our inferring from them a logical conclusion. It is entirely beyond our power to refuse a logical conclusion, while we have a conviction of the truth of the given premises, nor can our belief be possibly *modified*, so long as the data remain to us unchanged; but we can easily reconsider those data, and then, according as we find them confirmed or shaken, we frequently strengthen or subvert our belief in the conclusion. Just so, in the other case, while the motive remains, the volition must necessarily follow; but that motive, we must remember, is a state of mind, which we can control by a thousand different methods; and hence, if we can control the motive, *through it* we can control the volition as well. It is precisely the same fallacy in principle which leads one man to say, "That we can no more change our belief than we can change the color of our skin," and another man to say, "That our

volitions are absolutely fixed by circumstances beyond our control." Of course, we can never alter the relation between the perception of premise and conclusion, nor between internal motive and volition; but we can, as we every day do, throw fresh light upon premises in the one case, and bring fresh inducements to bear upon our volitions in the other.

We might explain the fixed relation that exists between motive (in the sense just explained) and volition, by a reference to the mathematical idea attached to the word *function*. A sine, we say, is the function of an angle. There is a relation between them which can never be altered; and hence, so long as you have a particular angle in contemplation, the sine is *necessarily* determined. If you require a sine of a different magnitude, the only possible way of obtaining it is by taking an angle of a different magnitude; the one varying with the other, because the relation between them is abiding. In like manner it is impossible to alter the relation between our motives and our volitions, the one following *necessarily* from the other; but notwithstanding this, we have a spontaneous power upon our motives (*i. e.* our emotional states), by the exercise of which we can either reverse or modify our volitions almost to any extent we choose. *Volition is a function of the mind*, and by whatever means we can influence the mind as a whole, we have by those very means a power over the determinations of the will. All this is indeed tacitly granted and implied by the necessarian, when he exhorts his fellow-man to the cultivation of his intellectual and moral feelings.

But to all this argumentation, I am aware, the necessarian opponent might now urge in reply, that the very fact of our influencing our own mental states by the presentation of fresh motives and inducements to the mind, must itself depend upon a volition, which volition is determined by a previous motive, and so on, *ad infinitum*. It must be remembered, however, that *motive* here means a *mental state*, and that our mental states do not *solely* depend upon external circumstances, over which we have no control, but also upon our own spontaneity. If this spontaneity be denied as a part of our constitution, and man be made wholly dependent upon externals, then we must appeal to psychology, for in the psychology we start with, the whole question is cradled.

The argument of the necessarian—that every volition must be determined by a previous volition, and so on to infinity, will only hold good on the psychological principle, that *will* and *desire* are

the same thing, both equally expressing a *passive* state into which we are placed by the strongest inducement. The psychology, which maintains this theory, starts from sensation, and from it derives all the phenomena of the human mind. The mind itself in its view is passive; it is a bare receptacle of impressions and feelings, a sheet of blank paper; and every volition, therefore, must on this theory have its cause or circumstances out of ourselves. This psychology, however, we disown; we regard it as altogether untenable; disproved, and exploded, by the strictest inductive analysis of the facts of our consciousness.

A close analysis of these facts enables us to detect three classes of phenomena in the human mind; those, namely, of *intelligence*, of *feeling*, of *will*—a classification to which all modern science is tending. Intelligence creates conceptions, laws, rules of action; sensibility supplies inducements and impulses; will creates effort, activity, the emission of voluntary power. Between the faculty as cause and the product as effect, there is no intermediate step. It is no more requisite to ask, *why* will produces effort and choice, than to ask, why intelligence gives rise to ideas, or sensibility to impulses? The supposition that voluntary effort and choice can spring causatively from an inducement or external motive, is the old error of sensationalism invading the theory of the will, that, namely, of substituting the *occasion* for the *producing* cause. The understanding and the feelings both present inducements to the will; and because the will follows some or other of them, it is supposed to be *necessarily* determined; but this is a false conclusion. These inducements are but the *occasions* of our volition; the power which produces them is that original spontaneity, that independent source of action which we term *the Will* or *the Me*, and which can react upon all the arguments of reason and all the impulses of emotion. The will, as an abiding fact in our constitution, contributes a large element to the formation of every motive, and when the motives are presented, it gives the whole *nisus*, by which volition or choice is effected.

Whenever or wherever power is put forth, there must be not only an *occasion*, but also an effort or a spontaneous movement as its *cause*. Hence all power originates in *mind*—the only spontaneous principle, and that either the mind of God or the mind of man; and the very same argument which pretends to prove that man is not free, because he chooses from reasons or inducements, would also prove that God is not free, because he never acts without a



plan. If we once give up the idea of spontaneity, as the spring of effort or choice, and account for that effort by the inducement alone, nothing can save us from the admission of an enormous and iron fatalism, to which God and man are alike subjected.

We allow, then, that volitions must necessarily follow from motives; that there is in fact a fixed relation between them; but those motives are subjective states of mind, such as dispositions, affections, passions, &c., which our intellectual and active nature are adapted by their very constitution to develop, or to restrain. When, therefore, the necessarian enunciates the great truth, that no man could have acted differently from what he did under the given motives, all that he really expresses, if he be not a fatalist, is the commonplace and most obvious fact, that emotions are the active principles of our nature, and that we always act in accordance with their impulse. If he denies that we have any control over these inward motives, then all his exhortations to the cultivation of the intellect and the feelings are nought but folly, and there is no refuge but in complete circumstantial fatalism. *We affirm, then, that in principle there are only two possible hypotheses respecting liberty and necessity; the one is fatalism, the other is free-will, in the sense in which we have employed it.*

There is one thing which we freely grant to be fixed and necessary on every hypothesis, namely, the *relation* existing between our emotions and our volitions; and the philosophical necessarian, keeping his eye upon that point, has enstamped all volition as constrained, because it is always excited by a uniform and definite law of our nature: but as well might he call our *actions* constrained also, because they *necessarily* follow whenever the volition dictates and impels. When we see an action, (unless it be a purely mechanical one), we know that it arises from a volition: and in the same way, when we observe, or are conscious of a volition, we know that it arises from an emotion as its real proximate exciting cause; but behind both these lies the solid basis of human liberty, grounded upon that intelligence and native activity, which are the indestructible attributes of all moral and responsible creatures.

Self and nature, as we have already seen, are both of them powers, which act and react upon each other. Some men, unquestionably, are more under the influence of external things than others, while some, on the contrary, have what we term a *strong will*; that is, they possess a great capacity and habit of acting from fixed design rather than from short-sighted and more impul-

sive motives ; but in either case, the real course pursued is the resultant of those two forces. Men who look most to the outward force, will form an exaggerated idea of its magnitude, and incline to the sensational form of philosophical necessity ; while men who turn their thoughts most within, perceive the will operating so decisively upon external things, that at length they imagine it to be well-nigh or entirely supreme. The sensationalist, accordingly, will ever tend to the doctrine of necessity, since the idea of nature occupies the largest share in his philosophy ; the idealist will just as naturally tend to that of free-will, since the notion of self, in this case, becomes far the more predominant. A mere glance at the history of philosophy will show that in nine cases out of ten the sensationalist and the necessarian, and the idealist and the libertarian, have respectively coincided with each other. We look upon both these classes of philosophers, however, so long as in their view of human nature they fall short of complete fatalism on the one hand, and subjective idealism on the other, as being generically advocates of the very same principles of voluntary action ; the only difference lies in the relative share of influence which is assigned to self and not-self in the formation of our character and our dispositions.

The truth of the matter may be stated in a very few words. Mind is essentially an active principle ; but, without reason, its activity would be blind and aimless, following the impulses which flow in upon it from without. In proportion as reason becomes stronger, more vast, and more commanding, just in that proportion shall we find it regulating and directing our emotions. But our emotions are the real motives which excite volition, and volition impels to action ; so that it is in the possession of reason that we discover the great regulating principle, by which our natural activity is either restrained or directed, and by which we are enabled both to sketch out the designs of our life, and to pursue them in spite of all the obstacles which may stand in our path.

The error, then, in the necessarian school, which we have now been considering, is that of exaggerating the influence of circumstances and depressing the notion of *mind*, as an independent principle of action. In proportion as this is the case, the idea of responsibility becomes weaker ; crime is regarded rather as a disease ; praise and blame as more nearly synonymous with felicitation and pity ; and man becomes a link in one great chain of events, by which the purposes of Providence will at length be un-

folded. Some of the authors of this school go much farther in adopting such conclusions than others; and more commonly than not, the shallowest thinkers carry out their principle to the furthest extent. If such writers as the author of "The Philosophy of Necessity," instead of assuming a tone of almost amusing defiance against far deeper thinkers than themselves, and holding up their favorite doctrine to view, as a remedy for all the ills of humanity, would only analyze more closely the subjects on which they write, and in place of making new discoveries in moral science, attempt to comprehend the old; we should hear no more about the doctrine of necessity as a *practical* principle in morality, than we hear of it in connection with the motives, which induce men to plough their fields, to pave their streets, or to carry on their merchandise.

The whole of the utility of such ethical treatises, if there be any in them, is derived from their setting forth one very plain precept, "Mould your circumstances, or else they will mould you:" the bane of them is, that men easily abuse the results and, under the plea of necessity, break loose from all idea of moral obligation.

Before we close our sketch of this controversy, we must just allude to the extreme form in which the necessarian principle has appeared under the title of "Socialism." This is the most extreme development of philosophical necessity which the present age has known, and cannot, therefore, be altogether passed over; although the very dogmatical and unscientific character in which it has been enunciated, almost deprives it of any title to the name of philosophy. In making a few observations on this system, we shall not enter into a deduction of its consequences, or the thousand and one anomalies which it really contains; these have been shown in several different forms, some argumentative and some declamatory, by many controversial writers. Our business is simply with the *philosophy* on which the system is grounded, in estimating which we must go to the axioms which are placed at the head. Let us look, then, at the "fundamental facts" upon which the whole superstructure rests.

We are told, first, "That man is a compound being, whose character is formed of his constitution or organization at birth, and of the effects of external circumstances upon it from birth to death; such original organization and external influences continually acting and reacting each upon the other." Now, if this fact means merely to assert that the whole of the influences which form a man's character consist of the powers and faculties which he has

naturally, and the circumstances which lead to their development; that is, in other words, of his subjective self, and of objective reality acting upon it; then it simply amounts to a truism of about the same description, as that a whole is equal to its parts. What in the nature of things can there be in the case, beyond the subjective and the objective, and their mutual relation to each other? To make this theory of any use, the necessarian must show *that spontaneity is no part of our original constitution*. Or, if it mean to assert, *secondly*, that man consists merely of a *bodily* organization at birth, which is moulded by the influence of external things afterwards, then it coolly begs the whole question of materialism, sets down the Hartleian psychology as undeniable, and reasons from them both as if axiomatically true. In a word, if it mean that, because man has a certain mental constitution given him, and is afterwards exposed to circumstances beyond his control, *therefore* he is entirely the subject of necessity, it takes for granted all along the very point it intends to prove, namely, that *in his primary constitution* there is no provision made for his free agency. This first law, therefore, we regard as absolutely futile, for either it says nothing at all, or it takes everything that is intended to flow from it for granted; and in either case it is so equivocal in its meaning, as to be totally unfit for a primary fact, that is supposed to be something incapable of misapprehension.

The second of these fundamental facts is as follows:—"That man is compelled by his original constitution to receive his feelings and his convictions independently of his will." Now, here the same error is committed in its full extent, to which I have before alluded—I mean, the error of supposing, that, because our belief follows from certain data, and our volitions flow from certain emotions, in either case *by a uniform law of our nature*, therefore both belief and volition are entirely beyond our control. Of course, if I have two legitimate premises of a syllogism given, I am necessitated to draw the conclusion they contain; but this is far from proving, that I have no power to subvert my belief in that conclusion by other means. To call the perception of sequence in an argument, as Mr Owen does, an instinct, is nought but a total perversion of language; and as to its bearing upon the doctrine of necessity, properly so called, it illustrates nothing whatever beyond the regularity of this law of our mental constitution. Just on the same principle, is it equally fallacious to infer, that our volitions are constrained, because they come and go



through the operation of certain laws relating to our active powers. The mental affections from which our volitions arise, we must remember, are placed under the control of our reason and will, and to call them instincts, as though they operated *blindly*, in the same manner as do the impulses of animals, is an entire misapprehension of the whole philosophy of our active powers.

Try for an instant how phraseology of this nature (substituting the word instinct for conviction, belief, and disposition) would sound in ordinary life. I have an *instinct* that such a road leads to the village A, but I go and explore the country, and finding myself wrong, I have now another instinct, that I must go thither by a different road. My instincts, it is pleaded, are absolutely necessary, and therefore, under the former one, I could not but take the wrong road, however much it might have cost me or injured another to do so. What reply would such an excuse justly call forth? Fool that you were, why didn't you inquire the way? For what purpose was intelligence and activity given you, but to direct your course, whether it be in small matters or large? In like manner, what would be thought of a man who pleaded his *instinct*, when he robbed or cheated or beat his fellow-creature? Call such propensities diseases, if you will; they are diseases such as every sane man has the means of guarding against, from the fact of his possessing intellectual powers, moral perceptions, and voluntary activity; diseases, therefore, for which he is personally responsible, in proportion to his light, both to God and man.\*

Against the appeal which Mr Owen makes to our consciousness, whether evil emotions do not rise within us, not subject to the control of the will, we make the contrary appeal, whether our susceptibility of these emotions is not to be repressed by the guidance of our reason and by the voice of our conscience. The education of our moral susceptibilities is analogous to the formation of a mechanical power of body; as the facility, for example, of performance on a musical instrument. Such facility is not the effort of *one* volition, but the gradual effect of a number often repeated under the direction of our reason. So likewise the moulding of our affections, emotions, and desires, though it is not the result of a single exertion of the will, is effectually accomplished by a series of volitions, all adapted to that end by an active and overruling

\* The demagogues who excuse crime by the plea of our actions and dispositions being necessary, seldom consider that on their principles, the oppression and punishments of which they complain are necessary too. The fatalist is very illogical in being a grumbler.

intelligence. I take up a new instrument, and find I cannot, by any direct volition, perform upon it; but do I therefore conclude that performance is not attainable by volition at all? So, also, I resist a desire or propensity, and find that my volition is not strong enough at once to give me the power over it, which I require; but the conclusion which some draw that such propensities cannot be influenced by volition at all, is equally unsound, as would be that to which I have just alluded. The fallacy of arguing that because certain affections cannot be commanded by a single volition, therefore they cannot, by any number whatever, is that known in logic under the name of "*fallacia compositionis*," and in this case it is very easily solved by an appeal to the facts of everyday life.

There is yet another absurdity couched under the loose language of this second "fact," and that is the declaration, that man, by his original constitution, is compelled to receive his feelings and convictions *independently* of his will, whereas, in fact, the will is a part of that original constitution which compels him, and has its share with the rest of the faculties in the whole process by which the mind is enlightened and the feelings expanded. This second fact, indeed, when analyzed, has just about the same nonentity of meaning in it as the other, while the proof of it is based upon an unparadonable abuse of the ordinary language, by which we are accustomed to express our ideas upon metaphysical subjects.

The third fact is no better, namely, "That our feelings or convictions, or both of them united, *create* the motive to action called the will, which stimulates him to act, and decides his actions."

To speak of feelings or convictions *creating* the will, is simply an absurdity. The will is another name for that real but mysterious power of mind, which, in a moment, can, at its bidding, emit an energy, that leads us to voluntary action or endurance. Feeling and convictions could never *create* this power, although it is quite true that they may influence the movements of it. This being premised, the fallacious conclusion intended to be drawn from such a representation, becomes manifest. The argument implied in it is this. Our feelings and convictions *create* the will, therefore the will which is a creation of their own cannot possibly have had any previous influence upon them. But how does the case really stand? The will is a mighty energy of a nature quite its own, which restrains or impels the whole man at its behest; created, moreover, not by feelings and convictions, but by the Author itself of the human mind. Our feelings and convictions act upon this

power, and set it in motion ; but then it at once reacts upon them, and, guided by intelligence, moulds them to a vast extent at its pleasure. Take a separate volition, and it is quite true that this is determined by some feeling or emotion of the mind ; but we must be cautious not to confound an individual volition with *the will*, viewed as the abiding fact or principle of our spontaneity. A single volition is to the will, as a whole, what a single wave is to the ocean. Because the wind creates every wave which heaves upon the surface, is it therefore true that it created the ocean itself ? And so, because a feeling or a conviction may occasion a separate volition, is it, therefore, true that it originates the voluntary power of which this volition is but a movement ? It is in the confounding of these that the source of the error we are exposing is to be found, an error which, in fact, vitiates the whole conclusion. It is not true that our feelings, or convictions, or both united, create the will, neither, if the word create be twisted so as to signify only so much as the word determine, does it follow, that because a single volition is determined by our feelings, therefore the will taken as a whole has no power to react upon them ?

The fourth fundamental fact\* is a remark perfectly true, but in any other system besides the one before us, would be regarded as perfectly useless, because it is always taken for granted. The fifth fact† is also based upon a true idea, but is stated in such a manner as to exaggerate greatly the influence of circumstances upon the human organization. In fine, taken as a whole, it would be difficult to find any system of philosophy in an enlightened age, built upon a foundation so indefinite, so equivocal, and so utterly incapable of sustaining a superstructure of any weight, or of any durability.‡

The sentence in which the whole point of the system is acknowledged to be concentrated, is, "that the character of an individual is formed *for* him, and not *by* him." But in no sense whatever can this sentiment be true, except we regard it as expressing the obvious fact, that none of our faculties are self-created, and that, consequently, whatever mental energy we have, comes originally

\* The fact runs as follows :—

That the organization of no two human beings is ever precisely similar at birth, nor can art subsequently form any two individuals from infancy to maturity to be precisely similar.

† The fifth fact is this :—

That, nevertheless, the constitution of every infant, except in case of organic disease, is capable of being formed into a very inferior or a very superior being, according to the qualities of the external circumstances allowed to influence that constitution from birth.

‡ To see the above system put in its philosophical form, consult "The New Moral World," parts i. and ii.

from an extraneous source ; that is, from the hands of the Creator himself. The mental constitution of a man is *himself*, as distinguished from every one else ; so that, to affirm that our characters necessarily arise from our original constitution, as acted on by external circumstances, and then to add that every one's character is formed independently of *himself*, is a palpable contradiction in terms. No doubt our minds themselves were formed *for* us by the infinite power from which they emanated ; but ever since their formation, they have had a great share in the development of our moral dispositions, a fact which Mr. Owen unwittingly and unintentionally grants, when he speaks of the original constitution moulding the character.

The point, no doubt, which the doctrine of the new moral world intends to aim at is, that man is born a *passive creature* with certain susceptibilities ; that external circumstances acting on these susceptibilities, of necessity give rise to our dispositions, and through them form our whole character. The view thus taken of human nature is, doubtless, such as might naturally enough be formed by a mind, that has slender reflective powers, a weak sense of the sacredness of moral distinctions, little reverence for religion, and which, in addition to this, has been accustomed to deal with that class of mankind, which exists rather as the appendages and the machinery of commercial life, than with those who are inured to habits of deep meditation or of moral refinement. The primitive judgments, the fundamental ideas, the original moral perceptions, and the sense of responsibility, which are among the very clearest phenomena to the reflective mind, are here all lost sight of, while man is reduced simply to an animal of somewhat higher instincts than the rest of the animated creation around him. This, we say, is the *meaning* of the system, but the attempt at stating these principles scientifically, and the aim at philosophizing without any sound capacity for philosophy, have given rise to so much that is indistinct and paradoxical in language, that, were not the consequences inferred of a serious nature, the whole matter must be regarded as a nonentity, which were not worth the "pomp and ceremony of an argument." So long as Mr. Owen, in common with the rest of the sensationalists, performs the real mission of this school of philosophy, by pointing out the importance of attending to the influence, which outward things exert upon the mind and character, he is to be admired and applauded ; but when he drives his principles to an extreme, shaking the pillars of morals and re-



ligion, and involving all human things in one unalterable chain of fixed necessity, he presents another instance to be added to the many which have gone before, of the absurdities into which those men invariably fall, who devote their whole life to the expansion of one idea to the neglect of everything else.

In concluding these remarks upon the necessarian controversy, we shall take the opportunity which is here offered of making one or two observations towards elucidating the real ground of human liberty. The great stumbling-block against the admission of this fundamental truth, is the principle of causality. "Every phenomenon must have a cause; volition is a phenomenon, and therefore must be caused;" such is the position in which necessarianism intrenches itself. Now, for this argument to be good, it must be shown, that the principle of causality applies to voluntary agents *in the same sense* as it does to the material world, and that a phenomenon in the one case is under the same conditions as a phenomenon in the other.

It is here that the prime mistake originates. The very foundation of the difference between a being possessing a personality, and everything else around him is, that he holds an entirely different relation to the chain of causes and effects by which the phenomena of the material world are linked together. By a phenomenon in this latter sense, we mean something which *begins* to exist, and then *terminates*. Suppose I make one ball strike another: the cause of motion in the second ball is the movement of the first; the cause of movement in the first is the impulse given to it by my arm; the cause of that impulse is the action of the nerves which convey energy from the brain; and the cause of this nervous action is *a volition*. Here the movements of the first and second ball, of the arm and the nerves, as well as the volition itself, are all phenomena, which *begin to exist*, and therefore must have in each case a *particular cause* adequate to the production of the effect, which effect accordingly must *necessarily* follow when the cause is at hand.

But now we have to ask (for this is the main point) *what is the cause or ground of the volition?* By what power is it called into being? It is not produced by an argument, or an inducement, or an objective motive of any kind: these might have given *occasion* to the volition, but none of them could really impart the mysterious power itself, by which mind sets the machinery of the body in motion, for the accomplishment of its purposes. The ground of the volition is only to be seen in the fact of my personality, in other

words, in the fact, that I am the subject of a spontaneity of action entirely distinct from any quality resident in the material world. Admit that some inducement gave occasion to the volition; yet still the very fact of choosing that inducement out of the rest, implies an effort of will. Now this fact of personality, and consequently, this phenomenon of liberty, is one of whose *beginning* we know nothing; whose *cause*, independently of the great first cause of all things, we are totally unable to trace. It is an ever abiding reality, to which the term phenomenon is applied in quite a different sense from what it is to other objects around us; one, therefore, to which the principle of causality, in its proper sense, does not at all apply. If our spontaneity were to come and go, presenting a *succession* of phenomena, then we should look for a cause, by which each of the parts of this succession were severally produced; but as it is one abiding fact of mind, which never varies, we can no more inquire for the *particular* cause of its spontaneous action beyond the will of the Creator, than we can for the particular cause of the great abiding fact of the universe itself. That very attribute of deity, which renders God himself a spontaneous source of action, was communicated by the Deity to man, when he made him intelligent, responsible, and free.

Instead, then, of arguing the doctrine of liberty, upon the arena of our separate volitions, which, as they come and go, are subject to the law of causality, we must remove the question one step further back to the idea of personality. Volitions are *not* free, but man is; they are in each case determined, but *man* determines them; they each arise and go as their cause impels, but that cause itself, which is grounded on the very notion of personality, is not a phenomenon, but an abiding fact of mind—*freedom*.

To test the justice of these conclusions we have only to appeal to the facts of our consciousness. Do we mean the same thing when we speak of a cause and when we speak of a motive? Do we attach the same certainty and uniformity of sequence to the one as we do to the other? And if we feel on certain occasions a motive to be for a moment irresistible, are we not conscious of a higher power within, lying behind the impulse that urges us, by which the motive may be arrested and the spell of its influence finally broken? This power is no other than that of spontaneity, the attribute and distinctive feature of every being that possesses reason and personality.

Consider again the phenomena of intelligence, of design, of at-

tention. Whence is it that we can form purposes ; whence that we can judge between plans for execution ; whence that we can make at any premeditated time a beginning ; whence that we can stop in our course, and anon proceed ; whence that we mould all the circumstances in which we may be placed, so as to tend to the accomplishment of our scheme ? These voluntary actions, it is true, may spring from motives ; but motives, we again repeat, are states of mind, in the production of which self, as an active principle, has as much, and often *more*, to do than any objective realities. All these facts point to a uniform and abiding cause, which does not take its stand among the passing phenomena of human things, but which is free and active in its very nature ; open, indeed, to the influence of inducements, but not governed by them ; cognizant of the power of motives, but having no cause and no beginning, except in God. To the argument, then, before stated, "Every volition must have a cause, and therefore is *not* free," we may reply, "Every volition has a voluntary cause, and therefore the man is free."

The question as to the possibility of free agency in the creature co-existing with omniscience in the Creator, we do not attempt to moot. The problem is really the same as the possibility of God's creating a responsible and intelligent being at all, a possibility, which we can only resolve into the fact of the Divine omnipotence. God willed to make man free, and accordingly he is free ; he willed to create him in his own image, and did not therefore pass by the most distinctive feature which that image presents.\*

The long discussion into which the doctrine of necessity has led us, has almost caused us to lose sight of the original problem with which we started, namely, to determine by what faculty it is, that we become cognizant of moral distinctions. The analysis, however, which we have given of human liberty, has gone far to settle this point also. Take any action of a voluntary agent, and ask

\* I know not whether anything more satisfactory can be said on this point, than what has been said by Archbishop Whateley, namely, that on these high questions relating to Deity, we see only *parts* of great truths, and not enough to render them perfectly consistent to our understanding. Much confusion too would be prevented if the strictures he has given upon the ambiguity of the term, necessity, were kept in view. The effect of such a clearing up of terms is always to bring the matter in hand to its plainest statement, and show the real basis on which it rests. This, in fact, the Archbishop has done, by appealing on behalf of freedom to the moral consciousness of mankind. "If in saying all things are fixed and necessary, they [necessarians] mean that there is no such thing as voluntary action, we may appeal from the verbal quibbles, which alone afford a seeming support to such a doctrine, to *universal consciousness* ; which will authorize even those, who have never entered into such speculations as the foregoing, to decide on the falsity of the conclusion, though they are perplexed with the subtle fallacies of the argument,"—Bampton Lecture, Appendix, p. 533.

—why is it a moral action? First of all, we must see that it is not a mere forced and instinctive movement, but that it really flows from volition. But, next, from what does the volition flow? Clearly, as we have seen, from a mental *emotion*; so that we must now look to this, as including in it the moral element. But lastly, whence arises the emotion? Psychology shows us, that every emotion springs from some conception of our reason. In reason, therefore, we have the primitive and essential distinction of right and wrong, arising upon the contemplation of human actions; in emotion, we have the feeling of moral approbation and disapprobation excited by this conception; and then in the will we find the effort, which carries out the last impulse of the emotions into practical operation. If one of these three elements be wanting, the moral nature must be incomplete. First, we must have the conception of right and wrong, or moral intelligence would be wanting; next, we must have the feeling or impulse arising from it, or moral disposition would be wanting; and lastly, we must have freedom to act upon right or wrong motives, or else responsibility would be wanting. According to this, conscience or the moral nature must consist in the combination of reason, sensibility, and will, all acting together upon the fundamental conceptions of good and evil; while the perversion of conscience must consist in dimming our moral ideas, in blunting our moral susceptibilities, and in weakening the power of the will over the whole man. How vastly this differs from the sensational view of our moral nature, which makes it consist in calculating for pleasure, it is needless to explain.

#### (C.) SENSATIONAL PHYSIOLOGISTS.

The application of physiological investigations to mental science is, comparatively speaking, of recent date. A few crude speculations may be found amongst writers of an earlier period, respecting animal spirits and other “fictitious entities” of a similar nature; but all of them about equally visionary and ungrounded. Hartley in our own country and Bonnet on the Continent, appear to have been the first who employed a sound and experimental knowledge of the human frame to discover the physical conditions of sensation or intelligence; although in neither case did very marked success result from their efforts.\* But within the last twenty years

\* Perhaps we ought to have mentioned Swedenborg, as one who in the eighteenth century grounded many psychological views upon his extensive researches in anatomy and physiology.



the science of physiology, both as applied to man and to the inferior animals. has expanded to so vast an extent, and the multitude of the results it has unfolded is so great, that its bearing upon intellectual philosophy has now become evident. To offer any correct analysis of these results is not within the limits of our capacity; nor, were this the case, would it comport with the plan we have set before us, of never leaving the track of speculative philosophy. Speculative philosophy, however, has been so far influenced and benefited by these investigations, that it seems imperative upon us to point out specifically, before we proceed further, what the most prominent of the advantages referred to really are. The main points, then, in which physiology has aided the investigations of the metaphysician, may be found, perhaps, included in the following particulars.

1. It has either done away with, or prevented the existence of many false theories, which are generally found very obstructive to the real progress of truth. The phantasms of Aristotle, the animal spirits of Descartes, the vibrations of Hartley, and all such speculations, are virtually moved out of the road by a closer examination of the *facts* of the case, and thus prevented from encumbering the movements of scientific research. In opposition to such notions it has been discovered, that the different kinds of nerves have specific qualities of their own, and that, instead of *conveying* impressions, they give rise to certain phenomena simply by the excitement of their own properties.

2. Physiology has marked out three great divisions of the nervous system, showing the real distinction which exists between the sympathetic, the sensitive, and the motor nerves, and the actual difference there must accordingly be, between the proximate principle of organic life, of sensitive existence, and of voluntary action.\* Whatever, therefore, the ultimate principle may be in which all these phenomena are supposed to unite, yet physiology assuredly puts us on a right track when it indicates, by means of such discoveries, the propriety of investigating the distinctive features, which these three classes of phenomena present.

3. Physiology throws, in this way, considerable light upon the emotions, more particularly of those which are purely pathological or instinctive. The nerves of the instinctive emotions have been clearly pointed out, and their centre localized in the ganglionic

\* See a small tract on the "Connection between Physiology and Intellectual Philosophy." By John Barlow. Also Carpenter's "Human Physiology," p. 229, third edition.

masses which lie at the base of the brain ; thus showing, that as their organ is distinct from the cerebrum, there is every reason to conclude that these emotions also are distinct from, and may operate independently of the intellectual functions, which are traced to the cerebral hemispheres. A comparison, moreover, of the brain of animals, which, for the most part, have great instinctive powers and little intelligence, throws considerable light upon this portion of our constitution.

4. The physiology of the brain presents many facts respecting the organic *conditions* of thought, which illustrate various minor points in the philosophy of the human mind. As a proof of this, we may refer to the investigations of phrenology. Without giving any prejudication respecting the truth or falsity of phrenology as a whole, yet it can hardly be denied, that its attempts at cerebral physiology have brought to light many facts respecting the action of different divisions of the brain in connection with temperaments, dispositions, insanity, and mental manifestation generally, to which intellectual science is much indebted.

5. A still further advantage derived from physiology is the power it affords us of comparing the structure of the brain in different animals, with their various habits, and of placing both by the side of the cerebral development and the mental manifestations observable in man. Although it will assuredly never be possible to give a whole analysis of the intellectual and emotional phenomena of the human mind, grounded upon the structure of the brain and the nervous system, yet there can be no doubt, but that many of the *peculiarities*, which are attached to those phenomena, can be accounted for, and explained by an accurate knowledge of physical processes, and that much error is counteracted, when, instead of raising other theories to account for idiosyncrasies, we can refer them to their proper material causes.

In preventing then numerous errors, in giving verifications of certain general divisions of phenomena, and in accounting for many otherwise perplexing facts in the pathology of the human mind, we conceive physiology has been of considerable use to the metaphysician, and may yet unfold additional materials to aid his investigations. At the same time, it is of great importance that the two sciences should each hold their proper limits, and that the one should not be allowed to assume the ground which peculiarly belongs to the other. To mark the boundaries of physiology and psychology we must simply inquire,—what are the phenomena which we learn

by *consciousness*, and what those which we learn by outward *observation*? These two regions lie entirely without each other; so much so, that there is not a single fact known by consciousness which we could ever have learned by observation, and not a single fact known by observation of which we are ever conscious. A sensation, for example, is known simply by consciousness; the material conditions of it, as seen in the organ, and the nervous system, simply by observation. No one could ever *see* a sensation, or be *conscious* of the organic action; accordingly, the one fact belongs to psychology, the other to physiology. The acutest search of the physiologist entirely fails to discover anything at all analogous to a thought or an emotion, which are simply facts of consciousness; on the other hand, the functions of life, or the material affections of the brain, are phenomena of actual observation of which we are *never* conscious. These two orders of facts draw a broad line of distinction between the two sciences in question; and it is only in those particular instances, where certain phenomena of observation are found uniformly to co-exist with certain phenomena of consciousness, that they can have any direct or serviceable bearing upon each other.\*

Accordingly, the most eminent physiologists of our country, more especially those who manifest any considerable powers of philosophical thinking, as well as of outward observation, have admitted fully the importance of analyzing the facts of consciousness *reflectively*; while they have been content with confining their own peculiar science to its natural limits. The researches of Dr. Prichard, for example, upon the vital principle, clearly tend to show, that mind exists as a distinct entity; that its connection with the nervous system is confined to a few simple operations; and that beyond these we must study mental science, if at all, solely by the aid of our inward consciousness. Professor Alison, again, who perhaps more than any other writer has combined the metaphysician with the physiologist, is evidently an adherent of the more modern school of Scotch philosophy, and would probably go throughout, hand in hand with Brown, as a mental analyst. To these I may add the name of Dr. W. B. Carpenter, whose works

\* On the distinction between the sphere of observation and consciousness, see Jouffroy's "Mélanges Philosophiques," Art. de la Psychologie. Also his preface to the translation of Dugald Stewart in the "Student's Cabinet Library of Useful Tracts," vol. vi. We may remark, however, that Jouffroy carries his views on this point too far. In the phenomena of muscular action, we have the uniting point of the two sciences, the link which indissolubly connects the science of mind with that of organic matter.

manifest some of the best qualities both of the thinker and the observer. Besides the opinions which may be discovered in his volume on "Human Physiology,"\* it may be permitted me to add the following views on this question, which have been derived from a personal inquiry, made to him *as a physiologist*: namely, that peculiar and original mental qualities really exist; that these are quite distinct from any properties of a physiological character; that, when acted upon by their appropriate stimuli, they give rise to our various mental and moral manifestations; and that psychology is a science which must progress by an accurate induction of the phenomena of *mind*, as we see it around us in its different stages of development. All this tends to elucidate the fact we have before pointed out, that while physiology may cast a light in some particular points upon intellectual philosophy, yet the courses of the two run clear of each other, and that each must be investigated on its own grounds.

Whilst, however, some of the first physiological writers have thus wisely avoided the shoals of sensationalism, yet it cannot be denied, that the *exclusive* pursuit of physiology has a great tendency to withdraw the mind from following a reflective philosophy, and to lead it to indulge in what is merely experimental. Amongst those who have manifested this tendency, and attempted to investigate the facts of consciousness by the aid of outward observation rather than by inward reflection, we may distinguish two classes, viz., those who admit the independent existence of mind and those who do not; those whom we may, accordingly, designate as non-materialists and those belonging to the school of materialism. Our future remarks, then, upon the school of philosophers, whom we have included under the general term of *sensational physiologists*, will fall under these two heads.

We begin with the NON-MATERIALISTS. This term, it is right to premise, we employ in preference to the term *immaterialists*, because it not only includes those who actually oppose materialism, but likewise all those who, like many phrenologists, decline giving any answer to the question respecting the essence of mind; regarding it as a useless problem, for the solution of which we have not sufficient data.

Now, first, under this general and somewhat indefinite appellation of non-materialist, we may include a valuable class of authors, chiefly of the medical profession, who, without cultivating any re-

\* Hum. Phys. p. 366, *et seq.*



markable powers of mental analysis, yet subject the *habits* and *instincts* of man, the various points of his mental constitution which depend upon outward observation, and the relative influences of body and mind, to a close and often a very instructive investigation. They look upon human nature sometimes with the eye of the physiologist, sometimes of the natural historian; and, while from the habit of outward observation, the general tone of their philosophy flows most readily in the sensational channel, yet the results of their thoughts upon man in his various relations, are not only in themselves interesting, but often furnish materials, which more acute metaphysical analysts might employ to no small advantage in supporting a spiritual system. Amongst the works which have emanated from these sources, we shall content ourselves with simply mentioning the following, all of which have appeared comparatively within recent times:—Meryon's "Physical and Intellectual Constitution of Man;" Renon's "Delineations Physical, Intellectual, and Moral;" two interesting works written respectively by Drs. Yarnold and Bushman, "On the Philosophy of Reason and Instinct;" Newnham, "On the Reciprocal Influence of Body and Mind," and two works of Dr. Moore, "On the Power of the Soul over the Body," and "The Use of the Body in Relation to the Mind."

Almost the only professed physiologist of eminence, whom we could place here, is Sir C. Bell. That he is neither phrenologist nor materialist is sufficiently evident; and yet, when he affirms that "all our ideas originate in the brain, and are produced by the impression made on the extremities of the nerves," his philosophy appears of a strictly sensational character. To enter, however, into the miscellaneous philosophical opinions, which are to be found scattered throughout the pages of the above-mentioned works, and others of a similar nature, is not our present intention. Did they form together a distinct school of philosophy, they would claim a larger space in its history; but having just assigned them the position they may be regarded as holding in the speculative philosophy of our country, we must recommend our readers, who would enter into the minor shades of their opinions, to procure the works themselves, promising them no little pleasure and profit in the perusal.

Leaving, then, the writers of these miscellaneous disquisitions, we come now to consider by far the most prominent of all the modern systems of intellectual science, which bear upon them a

physiological character ; I mean that which is known under the name of *Phrenology*. This system we rank under the head of non-materialism, inasmuch as its chief and most able advocates in this country have either expressly maintained the spirituality of mind, regarding the brain merely as the organ of its manifestation, or else have altogether interdicted the question of spiritualism and materialism as lying beyond the powers of human research. Some, it is true, affirm that phrenology *necessarily* involves the truth of materialism ; but, without giving a judgment upon that point, we only remark, that our present business is with the actual facts of our national philosophical history, and that we must, therefore, regard such writers as those of the *Phrenological Journal*, not according to what it is affirmed by some they ought to be, but according to what they actually are.

In estimating the truth and value of the phrenological system as a whole, there are two distinct questions which come before us. First, whether the physiological facts upon which it is all based are correct ? And secondly, whether, if they be correct, they are of any use in giving us a basis, upon which the superstructure of an intellectual philosophy can be erected ?

Under the first inquiry, we seek to determine such points as these—whether the brain is in any true sense the organ of the mind's development ; whether separate portions of it subserve the manifestation of particular feelings or faculties ; whether the assignment of those portions are correctly made in the phrenological map of the human skull ; whether the power of mental exertion is in exact proportion to the size of the organ ; and lastly, whether we can judge correctly of the inward cerebral formation from the cranium as viewed by us externally. The fundamental evidence for settling points of this nature must be sought in a thorough acquaintance with the physiology of the brain and nervous system ; and, consequently, the first physiologists of the age are the direct source to which our primary appeal should be made. The result of this appeal is, that some eminent physiologists appear to be the advocates of phrenology, while many others of the highest class, so far from giving in their adherence to it, have stated some very strong objections, which, as far as we know, have never been *fully* answered.\* To determine the truth or falsehood of these objec-

\* The following extract is from Dr. Carpenter's "*Human Physiology*," in which the real difficulties of the case are very clearly stated :—" A fundamental doubt hangs over every determination of function, which results from a comparison of the size of the supposed organ or region in different cases. If it be true that the gray matter only

tions, lies entirely in the hands of future physiological investigators; but so long as the highest authorities are disagreed, it is folly to dogmatize upon the matter, as though it treated of nought but ascertained fact in the natural history of man.\*

is the source of power, and that the white is merely a conductor, we have no right to assume that the total size of the organ affords a measure of its power, until it has been shown that the thickness of the cortical substance can be judged by the size of the brain, or of any part of it. Certainly there is a considerable variation in this respect among different individuals, and it is yet to be proved that the relation is constant in different parts of the same individual brain. Until this is substantiated, all inferences drawn from correspondence between the prominence of a certain part of the brain, and the intensity of a particular function, are invalid; that is, if the general doctrine of the relative functions of gray and white matter be true. Further, there is, unfortunately, a considerable uncertainty attending all phrenological observations, which are made upon the cranium rather than upon the brain; this we have seen from the discrepancy between the statements of Gall, and the facts ascertained respecting the comparative weight of the cerebellum in castrated and entire horses. It appears to the author, too, that comparative anatomy and psychology are very far from supporting the system, when their evidence is fairly weighed. It is a very curious circumstance, that the difference in the antero-posterior diameter, between the brain of man and that of the lower mammalia, principally arises from the shortness of the posterior lobes in the latter, these being seldom long enough to cover the cerebellum. Yet it is in these posterior lobes that the animal propensities are regarded by phrenologists as having their seat. On the other hand, the anterior lobes in which the intellectual faculties are considered as residing, bear in many animals a much larger proportion to the whole bulk of the brain, than they do in man. Again, comparative anatomy and experiment alike sanction the conclusion, that the purely instinctive propensities have not their seat in the cerebrum. These examples, and many similar ones, that might easily be added, collectively show the uncertainty, to say the least, of the inferences that are by many regarded as firmly established.

"The evidence of pathology, again, tends to show that particular disorders of function may result from lesions of any part of the cerebral hemisphere; this has been especially noticed, for example, in regard to the loss of the memory of words, which phrenologists locate in the organ of language; there, of course, the lesion might be expected on their system to present itself; but this is by no means constantly or even generally the case. Phrenologists lay great stress on the effects of local injury in causing loss of memory of a particular subject; but this principle, if carried out to its full extent, would require us to regard each organ as split up into a large number of subdivisions; the organ of language, for example, having one storehouse for Latin, another for Greek, &c., either of which may be destroyed without the other being affected. A very important source of evidence is that afforded by the correspondence between the several kinds of monomania, and the forms of the brains of the persons exhibiting them; and the number of those who, having studied this question, have given in their adhesion to the phrenological system, is one of the most weighty evidences of its containing much truth. The doubts which have been expressed on the subject would have much less weight if the coincidence of phrenological determinations of character with truth were more constant. The fairest tests of these are to be found, as Dr. Holland has justly remarked, not in vague and ill-defined moral propensities, but in a few simple and well-marked faculties, such as those of numerical calculation, language, or music, which have no others in actual opposition to them, and the degree of perfection in which they can be clearly defined. We hear much from phrenologists as to their successful application of these tests, but we do not hear of the instances of failure. The author's own experience of their determinations, however, has certainly led him to the belief that failure is nearly as frequent as success."

\* Since the publication of our first edition we are happy to "report progress" on the subject of cerebral physiology. Mr. Noble's recent treatise on "The Brain and its Physiology," has called forth a reconsideration of the matter from Dr. Carpenter, the results of which are stated partly in his third edition of the "Human Physiology," (in loco and appendix,) and still more fully in Dr. Forbes' "British and Foreign Medical Review." His principal points of objection against the phrenological system, *physiologically considered*, are these:—1. That it does not cohere with the results of comparative anatomy. 2. That it is inconsistent with the facts of embryological development. 3. That it has entirely failed in educing the functions of the ganglionic masses at the



The real merit of phrenology is, that it has directed inquiry to the structure of the brain and the nervous system, and succeeded in drawing forth many interesting facts which otherwise would have been to this time enveloped in darkness. Had it been content with taking its place as one peculiar branch of human physiology, it would have appeared in a light perfectly unobjectionable to the most rigidly philosophical minds; but its ambition has, to a great extent, been its bane. To a certain degree, however, it must still be admitted, that phrenology in the physiological department has proved successful. It has elucidated the close connection existing between the brain as a whole, and our mental manifestations; it has led to many experiments with reference to the effect of cerebral injury or distortion upon the intellect and the feelings; it has educed many highly curious facts as to the organic processes connected with the development of the emotions, the intellectual faculties, and the propensities; it has, in a word, thrown a light upon our knowledge generally of the functions of the encephalon, which did not exist before, and so far has conferred a benefit upon the science of man which it were uncandid not to acknowledge. *But with these physiological researches, as it appears to us, the whole of its advantages terminate.*

To verify this opinion, we must come to the consideration of the other question we have stated, whether the physiological facts, allowing them to be correct, can serve as basis for a new system of intellectual philosophy? Here we regard phrenology as a total failure—a failure, moreover, which might have been predicted in the outset with unerring certainty, by any reflective and philosophical mind. The reasons on which this conclusion is founded, are of the following description:—

1. We should argue it from the very nature of the case. A system of intellectual philosophy must contain an analysis and classification both of our faculties, and feelings; it must give a complete enumeration of the elements of human knowledge; and it must trace them all to their real origin. The idea that all this can be accomplished by physiological observations, however valid

base of the cerebrum, in which Dr. C. is inclined to allocate *all the emotions*. 4. That it does not appropriate *all* the cerebral surface. 5. That there are insuperable obstacles against the possibility of determining the form of the cerebrum from observations on the cranium. Regarding the functions of the *cerebellum*, we think that Dr. C. has completely shaken the phrenological doctrine. Even Dr. Prideaux (whom we regret to find writing so intemperately in the *Zoist*, and thereby somewhat betraying his discomfiture) is obliged to assign some new functions to this portion of the encephalon. Anew, therefore, we commit the subject to the zeal of our physiologists, hoping we may soon have to *report progress* again.



and indubitable, can only arise from a total misunderstanding of the whole question. I will suppose for a moment, that we knew nothing whatever *reflectively* of our own mental operations; that the study of the human mind had not yet been commenced; that none of its phenomena had been classified; and that we were to *begin* our investigation of them upon the phrenological system, some notion of which had been previously communicated to us; we might in this case proceed with our operations with the greatest ardor, and examine skull after skull for a century; but this would not give us the least notion of any peculiar mental faculty, or aid us in the smallest degree in classifying mental phenomena. We could never know that the organs of the reasoning powers were in the front, and those of the moral feelings upon the top of the head, unless we had first made those powers and feelings *independently* the objects of our examination. The whole march of phrenology goes upon the supposition, that there is a system of intellectual philosophy already in the mind, and its whole aim is to show, where the seat, materially speaking, of the faculties we have *already* observed, really is to be found. Either our various powers and susceptibilities are *known* and *classified* before we begin any outward observations, or they are not. If they are already known and classified, then phrenology has nothing to do with the discovery; if they are not, then assuredly we can never find them out by mere external observation upon the skull; we can never turn them up to view by the scalpel of the anatomist, nor find them impressed upon the outward form of the brain. If every organ had its name and nature inscribed upon it by the Creator, then we should have a system of psychology at once; but so long as this is not the case, we must observe and classify our mental phenomena by reflection, before we can begin to map out the locality in which they are to be found.

Strictly speaking, phrenology cannot reveal a single intellectual fact, which was not equally known before; it cannot trace any points of human knowledge to their primary elements; it cannot perform in any case a single analysis of our complex notions; in a word, it can do nothing, allowing its facts to be all true, but point out a certain connection between two parallel series of mental and physical phenomena, the former of which have been already investigated.\* If any one then should be inclined to urge, that the

\* The Phrenological Journal admits that we must know our mental phenomena *reflectively* before we can allocate them—but still persists in calling cerebral obser-

very circumstances of different feelings or faculties operating in connection with certain portions of the brain, is a clue to a correct classification, it must be remembered that they are already classified as mental facts before any connection with the brain can be predicated of them. Leaving, however, this fundamental objection, we go on to point out,

2. The extreme indefiniteness, which attaches itself to all *phrenological observation*. We are willing to allow, that the general divisions of the phrenological system are correct. The researches of Tiedemann, quite apart from phrenology, and of others who followed in his footsteps, have abundantly shown that there is a regular progression in the nerves and brain of all animated beings, from the most imperfect up to man himself. They have discovered, moreover, that the human brain, in its gradual formation, assumes obscurely at different periods all the various types which are found in the animal creation, and that, consequently, man's organic superiority consists of *superadditions* made upon that which the lower genera possess, and not in a total dissimilarity from them. This being admitted, the phrenological principle naturally follows, that we must regard those parts of the brain, which man possesses in common with animals, as the organs of the animal propensities, and those parts which he possesses over and above the mere animal, as the organs of our superior intelligence, and moral feelings. But admitting all this, what do we learn from it, *as far as intellectual philosophy goes*, beyond what was equally known before? We did not require any phrenological aid to convince us, that the animal passions, the moral feelings, and the intellect, present three different classes of phenomena, which cannot be perfectly resolved into each other; so that, in the main divisions of

vation a *method* of studying psychology. I confess myself unable to see what *psychological truth* it unfolds, that is not equally clear without it. Does it reveal a mental fact? Not one. These are all facts of *consciousness*. Does it give us a classification? No. "We must know (I quote the critic) from our consciousness the distinction between thoughts and feelings, before we can trace their connection with particular parts of the brain." Does it define a single faculty or feeling—or give us any clue to the class of phenomena to which it should belong? No. The decision as to the class of phenomena to which any mental fact belongs, is left to the mind's reflective judgment, which would be quite unaltered wherever the organ of it might be found. We are willing to place the whole question of phrenology upon this one point. Let it be shown that it reveals a single fact of mind we knew not before—that it distinguishes between any two or more faculties, which we cannot distinguish by our consciousness—that any one could disown a mental phenomenon, because he finds no cerebral organ for it, or could believe he has another unobserved, because he finds an organ unappropriated—let it be shown, in a word, that any classification of our consciousness can result from it, which had not before been made in the consciousness itself, and we will admit phrenology to be a valid psychology. Until then, however, we can see nothing in it but a branch of human physiology.

phrenology, at least, we have no fresh assistance given us in classifying purely psychological phenomena, but only in judging of the physical processes which stand in connection with them.

But now, if we descend from the main divisions of phrenology to the details of the system (from which alone any new light could originate to aid our classification,) here we find so much indefiniteness, that it is absolutely impossible to rely upon its indications as philosophically correct. When we attempt to classify the facts of our consciousness by reflection, we have no very great difficulty in forming a general outline of them. Sensation, perception, memory, judgment, as also the different passions, all possess certain indubitable marks by which they are distinguished from each other; but when we come to consider the various organs which phrenology assumes, we find such a complete commingling of all the simple elements of our mental phenomena, as to render a close analysis of them impossible. Take, for example, such organs as concentrativeness or adhesiveness, and say what peculiarity they contain which can have an independent existence subjectively, or which may not be resolved into other elements. Patriotism—attachment to friends—concentration of mind upon an object—power of sustained attention, all are given as representing the functions of these peculiar lobes. Assuredly there does not appear to be much psychological light afforded by *such* an analysis. That I have a will, I admit; that my will governs all the faculties, and makes them *attend*, is also evident enough; but the force with which my will operates, is determined by a variety of circumstances. The duration or pertinacity of any mental exertion, must depend chiefly upon the *motives* we have for keeping our attention fixed upon the object before us. I may have, in fact, very large and very small concentrativeness at the same time, just according to the subject on which I am engaged, and the interest I feel in it; that is, just in proportion as my will is roused to effort. Take, again, the organ of philo-progenitiveness, and say why there should be a natural propensity and a particular lobe of brain, which excites love to a child, and none by which we are induced to love a parent, a brother, a wife, a friend, a sovereign, or anything else, with which we stand in close relation. Every one of these affections has an element of similarity, and an element of diversity in it. In all, it is *love*; but it is love modified by varying circumstances; the analysis of which in each case, far from being aided, is greatly hindered by the phrenological hypothesis. Place to-

gether, again, comparison and ideality, both of which enter so largely into the poetical temperament, or consider the elements of mind which could lead us to manifest order or locality, and we find that, instead of advancing our analysis of mental phenomena, these different organs confuse us in every attempt we make to arrive at simple and primary elements. To attain a perfect psychology two things are requisite. 1. We must observe accurately the great mass of complex facts which the human mind presents; and, 2. We must reduce them to their primitive elements, or original processes. The knowledge of our complex facts depends of course upon the *attention* we pay to our inward phenomena. Phrenology does not even pretend to give us any assistance here; it is altogether an affair of consciousness. The main question is as to the *method*, by which the multiplicity of complex phenomena passing through the consciousness, is to be analyzed and arranged. Now the only proper method to do this is to separate the *matter* of our mental processes from the *form*, to lay aside all consideration respecting the intensity of the action, or the diversity of object to which they may be directed, and to seize simply upon the *fundamental character* which they severally present. Here it is we see that phrenology has gone completely astray, that it has followed a method of classification altogether fallacious, and that it has given results totally worthless in a philosophical point of view. It has made its classification turn mainly upon the *objects* of our mental faculties, and almost entirely neglected their fundamental characteristics. On the one hand, it assigns different organs for the same faculty or feeling, because they apply to *different objects*; and then, on the other hand, it will turn a complex operation into a simple one, and appropriate to it a single organ, just because the whole process is directed to *one particular object*. Thus memory is distributed between three different organs, according as it applies to persons, to places, or to things; love, as a propensity, is divided into two or three more; judgment and imagination are mutilated in the same way. In brief, the form of our mental operations is utterly lost in the contemplation of their objects, and a classification results, which has all the bad qualities which can possibly attach to what is termed in logic, a cross division. But, reiterates the phrenologist, nobody can deny that these separate tendencies, such as love to wife, love to children, love to humanity, *really exist*, and that, therefore, they demand a separate allocation in our mental analysis. We reply, that love to a hundred other things really exists,



and, by parity of reasoning, ought to have distinct organs. If once the principle be admitted, that we may overlook the form, and classify according to the matter or object of our feelings and faculties, confusion will have no limit and no termination.\* In no sense then whatever, as it appears to us, does phrenology assist in forming a correct classification of our faculties and susceptibilities; it rather throws obstacles in the way, by assuming a large number of irreducible elements, between many of which it is impossible to find any valid fundamental distinction, when due allowance has been made for the influence of habit and of circumstances.

Again, great indefiniteness attaches to phrenological observations, from the various influences that disturb the fundamental law, upon which the whole system proceeds, namely, "That the power of any mental feeling or faculty is measured directly by the size of the organ." Now, it is admitted on all hands, that education greatly alters the *power* of our faculties without enlarging the organ, and consequently, it must throw a disturbing influence into the operation of the law above stated, which in a thousand instances will render it nugatory. Every one has some kind of education, and, consequently, it is certain that there will be some faculties in all, which will not show themselves in direct proportion to the size of their several organs. The same may be said with regard to the organs, which have a diseased action; in which case it is asserted by the phrenologists, that there may be prodigious power without any corresponding size in the development. This being admitted, it is clear that a peculiar quality or *state* of brain may give rise to power, as well as its size. It is almost proverbial, indeed, that stupid people have large heads; a peculiarity which, it must be granted, is often seen in connection with a slow phlegmatic temperament. Until we have some means, therefore, of knowing the *quality* of a man's brain as well as the *quantity*, there is an insuperable obstacle against the correctness of any phrenological con-

\* M. Tissot remarks on this point—"Without enlarging upon the determination, enumeration, and classification of the faculties as given by the phrenologists, it is clear at once, that those adopted by them are by no means intelligent; that they have, in fact, all the logical vices of which they are susceptible. Here they are redundant, there inadequate; here the consequence, however remote it be, is put upon a level with the principle; there the principle is forgotten, and the consequence announced; here again the consequence is detached from its principle, and there a little further on it is altogether rejected; breaking thus the whole analogy, both of the facts and ideas. If instead of confining our view to the nine propensities, we were to examine the twenty or thirty faculties which the phrenologists distinguish, what should we find then? We should make apparent in a thousand phases the utter chaos of this apparent arrangement, an arrangement more worthy of haphazard, than of serious reflection."—*Anthropologie*, vol. ii. p. 217. We recommend the phrenologist who is deeply in love with his *method*, to study M. Tissot's elaborate critique upon it.

clusions. Taking these things into account, we doubt whether the slightest aid could be ever afforded by phrenology in analyzing our mental phenomena; nor do we believe that a classification, grounded upon the position of the organs, can be in any way so satisfactory, as one which is grounded upon an accurate observation of the phenomena themselves.\*

3. With regard to some of the most important problems of metaphysics and morals, phrenology has never attempted any solution at all.

Suppose, for example, that in place of Dr. Reid, some ardent phrenologist had set himself to oppose the advancing scepticism of David Hume. How would he, in the outset, have grappled with the ideal, or, as we would rather term it, the representationalist system, which lay at the base of the whole controversy? Once shake man's confidence in the reality of his sense-perceptions, and it is not, neither can it ever be, in the power of a philosophy, which is built entirely upon external observation, to venture a single reply to any of the objections which the sceptic may have to offer. If our senses themselves deceive us, of course it will not do to trust the very observations upon which all phrenology is based. We strongly suspect that in such a dilemma the phrenologist would be glad to take refuge in the citadel of *common sense*, or some such reflective principle, and leave his developments to fight an easier battle.† Again, what can phrenology say in the great dispute respecting cause and effect, and the belief we derive from thence in a great first cause, the Author of the whole creation? Against the argument of Hume, that our notion of cause, and our confidence in the regularity of nature, are simply the results of association, it has nothing to bring forward except the fact, that we have an organ of causality, upon which such a belief is grounded. But to this it might be replied, how have you discovered this organ of causality, and why do you assign such a function to certain of the anterior lobes? The only possible answer on the part of the phre-

\* *Vide* Appendix, Note B.

† Nowhere is the insufficiency of phrenology as the basis for a *philosophy* seen more clearly than here. All the most important principles of human knowledge have to be either assumed, or borrowed by it from metaphysical writers. Nothing is clearer than that the senses *alone* could never originate knowledge, were there not a *rational* element to react them. Could we have ever *known*, for example, anything of the moon and stars by the senses only?—would not sensation have led us here utterly astray from the truth? Just so it is with everything else. Mere sensation can never be the basis for a philosophy; and yet phrenology either sets out with it as a sufficient guide, or takes for granted the whole of the *a priori* element, which alone can cause it to result in *knowledge*. Phrenology itself must be grounded in fundamental philosophy, and cannot therefore be a substitute for it.

nologist is, that he has observed the idea of causality really to exist in the human mind, and assigned it, by due observation, its place upon the map of the skull. It turns out after all, then, that we must fall back upon a purely mental analysis, and without any further evidence, suppose this analysis to be correct; so that the real argument of the phrenologist is a complete circle, the truth of the mental analysis verifying the organ, and the organ, in its turn, verifying the truth of the analysis. In all this there is really not one available step taken in analyzing our idea of causality; we are not an inch nearer any discovery of the ground upon which our confidence in a first cause reposes, nor can our belief in it be even, to an infinitesimal degree, more clear or certain than what it becomes by the introspection of our own consciousness.

It is useless to enumerate particularly the other problems, which have most taxed the powers of the metaphysical analyst; but just in the same manner it might be shown, that upon the question of the spirituality of the mind; upon such notions as those of time and space; upon the great idea of infinity with all that it involves; upon the personality or non-personality of the human reason; upon the absolute or relative character of human knowledge; that, in brief, upon all such fundamental points in metaphysics, phrenology sheds not a single beam to aid us in the research. The only thing it attempts is to ridicule the questions themselves, which is a method of treating them equally easy and ignoble.

If we turn from metaphysical to ethical philosophy, the same aptitude at eschewing, rather than solving difficulties, is visible in the whole proceeding of phrenology. Upon the fundamental question of human liberty (the very first condition on which the possibility of our being moral and accountable creatures rests), phrenology has *nothing* whatever to advance. It neither determines how far we are free agents, nor how far we are bound down to the law of necessity, but leaves the whole subject standing exactly where it was, before the light it lays claim to broke in upon the world. The same complaint follows us if we consider the two great problems of moral philosophy: first, what is conscience? and, secondly, what is virtue? Conscience, according to phrenology, is the combined action of benevolence, veneration, and conscientiousness. But on what ground, we ask, is morality made to depend upon the approbation of these three organs more than on any other? Are not all the organs as well as these three equally a part of our nature? Why may not the approbation of

secretiveness, acquisitiveness, destructiveness, or of self-esteem, be as good a test of what is right as that of the three organs just mentioned? Or on what principle, if any, is *their* especial superiority maintained? The only reply we have to such questions is, that these emotions are *felt* to have a commanding authority conferred on them, and that we can give no other account of the order of our nature, except that it has pleased God so to constitute us. After all the boast, then, about organs, as affording a clear foundation on which to erect a system of moral philosophy, it appears that we must still have recourse to our inward consciousness, in order to tell us which organs possess a moral authority, and which do not. The very point of the difficulty, therefore, is here untouched. We are simply told, consult your consciousness, and you will find what is right or wrong,—a maxim which was often enjoined long before phrenology dawned upon mankind. With regard to the other question, what is virtue? the case is very similar with the last. The whole difficulty of the matter is evaded by saying that the ground of morals is neither utility, nor the will of God, nor the approbation of conscience *alone*, but all these conjoined; so that all the benefit which phrenology confers upon us in this dispute is to patch the other theories together, and make a composite one infinitely more untenable than any of the other three.\*

We repeat, therefore, in conclusion, what we have already urged, that phrenology ought to have taken its place as one branch of physiological investigation; that, viewed in such a character, it has succeeded in educing many interesting and valuable facts respecting the material changes which accompany the exercise of thought and feeling; but that, in attempting to take its stand as a system of intellectual philosophy, it has entirely mistaken its proper place, and totally failed in throwing any light whatever upon moral or metaphysical researches.

Here, then, we shall close our observations upon the non-materialist class of sensational physiologists, and proceed to consider that complete development of sensationalism which has been exhibited to the present age in the writings of professed MATERIALISTS.

To clear the way for this, we shall just take a glance at the history of materialism in England after the time of Hobbes, and

\* These explanations of ethical questions on the principles of phrenology are taken from Combe's "Moral Philosophy."



attempt to discover, in this way, the different phases it has assumed. In 1665, a treatise was published in London, under the signature of R. O., in which the doctrine of materialism, and man's natural mortality, was sustained on the ground more especially of certain theological opinions which the author had adopted. At the commencement of the eighteenth century, Zachary Housel, one of the French refugees, published a defence of materialism in a kind of colloquial form, for which he was prosecuted and tried at the Old Bailey. About the same time some tracts were published by Henry Layton, a barrister-at-law, in which the natural mortality and homogeneity of man were argued with great acuteness. A similar attempt was made by Dr. Coward, who published, in 1702, a work (which was condemned and burnt) entitled, "Second thoughts concerning Human Soul, demonstrating the notion of Human Soul, as believed to be a Spiritual and Immaterial Substance, united to Human Body, to be an Invention of Heathens, and not consonant to the Principles of Philosophy, Reason, or Religion." In 1757, another physician, Dr. Robinson, published a treatise precisely of a similar nature, which thus completes a list of five authors between Hobbes and Priestley, who supported materialism chiefly upon theological grounds.

Priestley revived the *philosophical* materialism of Hobbes, supposing, in common with that author, that our very ideas are material essences; while Darwin went forward with the superstructure, until he laid upon it the top stone, an account of which we have already furnished in the second chapter of this work. From that time almost to the present hour, nothing of any importance has appeared either on the part of theological or philosophical materialism. A few experiments like those of Darwin have been made occasionally by naturalists, and here and there a second-rate writer of the theological school has appeared, who has followed in the footsteps of the five above mentioned; but, upon the whole, we may consider the controversy to have rested virtually in one and the same position since the reply of Brown to Darwin's "Zoonomia." In the meantime, phrenology has prepared the way for another phase of materialism, which now manifests itself through the writings of Drs. Elliotson and Engledue, and in its connection with mesmerism, is regularly advocated in the pages of the "Zoist."

The principles of this school of cerebral physiology are very clear and very simple. According to their view, the sole object of human research is *matter*; the term mind is a mere fiction, under

which we hide our ignorance of certain recondite physical operations: to speak intelligibly, the only mind which man possesses is the brain; thought is nothing more than cerebration; and the highest qualities, both of the intellectual and the moral feelings, nothing but the direct result of a superior organization. These results are sustained by an abundant appeal to our ignorance of any spiritual principle; by a reference to the progressive development of the nerves and brain in the different gradations of animal life; and, lastly, by the startling facts which are presented upon the subject of animal magnetism.\*

The three phases of materialism, then, which modern times present, are, according to the above statements—1, that of the theologian; 2, that of the naturalist; 3, that of the cerebral physiologist. Into the theological argument it is not our place to enter, since it rests upon scriptural rather than philosophical grounds. With regard, however, to the philosophical phases of materialism, there are a few considerations we have to present, which may place the question, at least to some minds, in a clearer position than that in which they have been accustomed to view it. These considerations refer to two points; first, to the *method* of philosophical research; and, secondly, to the *results*. Both the naturalist and the phrenologist, in so far as they uphold the doctrines of materialism, appear to us to be involved in much confusion, as it regards each of these points of inquiry. The whole discussion may perhaps be reduced to these two fundamental questions—1st, Whether intellectual science must be confined to the observation and classification of outward facts, or whether it must not ultimately rest upon the ground of our inward consciousness; and, 2dly, Whether there is really any evidence for holding the spirituality of mind, or whether matter must be regarded as the ultimate principle of thought and feeling. Whatever facts of a material nature may be evolved by physiological research, still these two problems will equally remain to be discussed upon purely metaphysical grounds.

And first, with regard to the method of philosophical investigation, materialists frequently argue in the following manner:—The human mind, whatever its essence, is originally a blank; by its contact with the outer world, it gains sensations and ideas. All knowledge, accordingly, comes through the senses—is the result

\* For a clear statement of this system of materialism, see Dr. Engledue's lecture before the Phrenological Society of London. (Ballière.)

of organic changes; and consequently all intellectual philosophy must be the result of observation and experiment. To study man, as well as anything else aright, we must simply observe the facts connected with the nervous system which present themselves to us by means of our sense-perceptions; all reasoning, therefore, upon inward consciousness in the philosophy of man, is to be given up, as being productive of nought but uncertainty and confusion; and intellectual science, if its facts fall not under the observation of the senses, is to be regarded as a mere imaginary province, lying quite beyond the true region of human knowledge.\*

Now admitting, for a moment, that all our knowledge is gained by means of observations made upon external phenomena, how is it, we would ask, that our observations are to be classified, arranged, and formed into those general principles of which knowledge, properly so called, alone consists. Isolated facts will never raise up a superstructure of valid science, unless they are linked together by some fundamental conception; neither will the observation of such facts, in any sense, bear the name of philosophy, unless they are pursued with a definite aim before us, and all made to tell upon the elimination of certain general truths. Sensationalists of the extreme school are apt to forget that there is a logic of *induction* as well as *deduction*, having rational axioms at its foundation; and that without these axioms, or at any rate without the truths which they embody being in the mind, the outward observation whereon they so firmly rely would be altogether nugatory. When the astronomer, for example, describes the eclipses which are to take place within the next year, upon what does he ground the certainty of his observation? Not upon *experience*, for that can only refer to the past; not upon mathematical reasoning only, for that has to do simply with abstract and necessary relations. He grounds it upon the confidence he feels in the regularity of the laws of nature; a confidence which arises from the constitution of our own minds, and is verified as a philosophical fact only by reflection upon our inward consciousness.†

Again, on what principle does the materialist himself investigate the phenomena of organization, which he would fain substitute for those of our consciousness? Does he really do nothing but observe facts? And, if he were confined to this, could he ever boast a single scientific result? No; so far from that, the moment he

\* This was virtually the principle of Hartley and Bonnet, and professedly the principle of Cabanis, together with the French and English school of materialism.

† See our remarks upon this point in the section on David Hume.

commences, as a physiologist, to investigate the functions of the animal frame, he shows that he is acting upon an *a priori principle*, a principle not derived from observation, but one upon which, in fact, the validity of all observation rests. There is a conviction in his mind prior to all actual research, that every organ which may be laid bare by the scalpel, performs a certain function, and has a final cause. Were the anatomist, neglecting this, merely to record *what he sees*, and to put down facts in their isolation, physiology as a *science* could never exist. The bond which unites his facts into a veritable branch of science, are certain fundamental axioms, whose office is to show the causal connection, which those facts have with each other. To admit such a connection, the physiologist has no scruple; it forms, indeed, the very method of and incentive to his labor; and yet, while he is pressing forward without a doubt as to his plan, he appears often quite blinded to the fact, that he is acting upon a purely *a priori* principle, which nothing but consciousness could ever reveal, and the truth of which can only flow from the validity of the subjective laws of our nature. There is neither an organ nor a function which he observes, respecting which he does not profess a certainty, that it has a cause and an end, even though both should be completely unknown; and upon this conviction he does not hesitate to proceed onwards in his research until they shall both be discovered.

"The improvement of physiology," remarks Dugald Stewart, in some observations upon Cuvier's researches, "is to be expected chiefly from the lights furnished by analogy; but in order to follow this guide with safety, a *cautious and refined logic* is still more necessary than in conducting those reasonings which rest on the direct evidence of experience." And again, M. Jouffroy beautifully remarks, in his Preface to Stewart's *Moral Philosophy*:\* "Nature is a drama of which *reason* only teaches the plot. To the eye of sense the world of phenomena is merely an ever-varying collection of isolated facts; a spectacle which has no significance. Its mystery is unfolded to us by reason alone, which reveals in every phenomenon the consequence and the principle of another; and in the aggregate of all phenomena, an immense chain of causes and effects, of which universal order is the admirable result. And such is the simplicity of this revelation, that it is entirely comprised in the conception of the absolute law of

\* See the "Students' Cabinet Library," vol. vi. p. 47, in which the whole subject of psychological research is admirably treated.



every phenomenon; a conception apparently trivial, but, in fact, most fruitful and sublime. This conception is the fundamental axiom in all the sciences of facts, the torch which guides their researches, and the soul which animates their method; the procedure of the physiologists in the study of the phenomena of life, is derived from it as a natural consequence.”\*

Let the ardent advocate of mere objective knowledge, then, consider, that, however extensively he may build his conclusions upon outward facts, yet there are *subjective* principles, upon which he must necessarily proceed, on which the whole superstructure of his scientific research, whatever branch it be, must be erected, and without which his knowledge would be all disjointed, and his real progress impossible. However eagerly the mind may go forth for a time to grasp the varied forms of nature, yet there will, assuredly, arrive a period when the objective movement will have run its length, when the soul's centripetal force will begin to react, when the great subjective movements in which the whole of man's activity originates will come forth to light, and when intellectual philosophy will resume the position, from which it has been ejected.

The attempt of the naturalist to account for the phenomena of thought and feeling by outward observation, is much on an equality with that of the phrenologist to localize the faculties, by merely observing certain visible developments. In the latter case we showed, that the very classification aimed at was supposed to be already made, and that we *must* have observed the various faculties in all their peculiarity before any local position could possibly be assigned them. In the same manner must there be to the physiologist a firm conviction and a clear conception of all our various mental operations, before the very notion of finding their physical causes could be entertained.

In brief, the result of these considerations is this:—There are two classes of facts equally certain and equally clear, those, namely, of outward observation, and of inward consciousness, which can never be resolved into each other, but which must both form the materials of true philosophical research. If we take the external world alone as our starting-point, we can never deduce from it the phenomena of mind, *i. e.*, we can never succeed in showing how the properties of matter can be possibly compatible with, or lead to, thought, feeling, and reasoning: and, on the contray, if we start

\* To see this subject more fully discussed, the reader is referred to Whewell's "Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences."

simply upon the facts of consciousness, allowing *that* only to be real which is deduced rationally from them, we can never succeed in getting beyond the circle of our own subjective being, so as to prove, by logical inference, the existence of a world without. Self, with its pregnant consciousness, is one world; nature, with its varied changes, another—each resting upon its own evidence: but, as all knowledge is *subjective*, *a priori* principles must lie at the basis even of physical science, while physical science, in its turn, may in some of its branches throw light upon the workings of mind in its present close relation with the material world. The question, then, as to the real nature of the “*philosophy of man*,” we consider, can admit but of one rational reply, namely, that the physiologist and psychologist have their own separate sciences, their own separate facts, and their own separate conclusions; that both proceed on sure grounds, and may evolve in their own department sure results; but lastly, that the one of these branches may often be employed to throw light upon the other.

We now proceed to the other, and the far more difficult point of dispute between the materialist and the immaterialist, namely, what is the ultimate principle of thought in man? is it homogeneous with matter? or, is there a mind essentially distinct? Now, first, there is not much difficulty in exploding the vulgar appeal to common sense, by which the more shallow and thoughtless materialist attempts to shake the ordinary belief of humanity in a thinking soul distinct from the body. He says, (in an argument which, in fact, begs the whole question,) show me the mind; point it out to the perception of any of the senses; prove to me in this way that the belief in it is not a mere delusion; give me the same strength of evidence for its existence, as I can furnish you for the existence of matter, and I am content. We reply, what is your evidence for the existence of matter? You talk about touching and seeing it, but what is it that sees, and what that feels? Is it the brain? If so, *prove* it on your own principles. Show me any physical process—any action of the nerves, or commotion in the cerebrum, that corresponds with a sensation or with the judgment, that I have an external object now lying before me. Where is the analysis of matter, however refined, which has resulted in a thought or a feeling; or who has traced the action of the nerves up, step by step, until he has come palpably and sensibly to an emotion? You know of the existence of matter simply because you *feel* that it exists; but that feeling is purely a fact of your in-

ward consciousness, which upon *your* principles, has no certainty or reality about it. Be consistent at once ; give up everything as veracious which has not external evidence ; and give up, therefore, the inward feeling upon which your confidence in a material world rests.

If the materialist rejoins, that the various feelings and judgments, of which we are conscious, are mere phenomena, which need not imply the existence of an invisible *spiritual essence*, we also rejoin, that hardness, or extension, or size, are merely phenomena which need not on the same ground imply a real *material essence*. Whether we regard the properties of body or mind, the subjoining to them of an essence or substratum is equally a process of *pure reason*, and the result is, a judgment or belief which in one case is no more certain than the other. The one says, I *must* believe in matter, and there is an end of the discussion ; the other says, with an equally final decision, and I, too, *must* believe in mind : in both cases alike there is a falling back upon the evidence of consciousness. The appeal to common sense, then, is altogether retortable, and leaves the whole question *in statu quo* ; both matter and mind resting on exactly equivalent evidence, be it sufficient or insufficient.

Now, as the whole discussion respecting the immateriality of mind has from its very nature been most fruitful in misunderstanding and logomachy, let us see in what the combatants, ordinarily speaking, really agree and in what they differ. With regard to the facts of consciousness, which we term thought, feeling, will, &c., there is no dispute ; all admit that we do think, that we do feel, that we do will ; to deny this would imply a mere play upon words, which it were not worth while to notice or refute. Again, both parties admit certain facts relating to the physical conditions of thought or sensation. They admit that we have a nervous system, that this is affected by impressions from without, that it has its centre in the brain, and that there is a certain action of the brain, either in whole or in part, corresponding with all the manifestations of intelligence or feeling. Now, these things being admitted, we pause, and ask—are there any more facts, besides those we have mentioned, to which either party can appeal ? The facts of physiology are granted on the one side, those of consciousness are granted on the other, and this is all, *absolutely all*, that any one can possibly know from direct observation, whether it be external or internal. The point, then, at which the materi-

alist and the immaterialist commence their diverging courses, is just where they have run the full length of actual observation, and begin to reason or to theorize upon what they observe

The material physiologist reasons thus:—Here is a wonderful piece of organization, the human body, producing the most extraordinary operations. Here is the stomach, which performs the functions of digestion; here the liver, which secretes the bile; here the brain, which produces thought and emotion. If we injure the stomach or the liver, we disturb the processes which they were intended to carry on; and so, if we injure the brain, it is found, that we equally affect the processes of thought and feeling. In the two former cases we assign nothing beyond the material organs as necessary to give the observed result, and why, then, should we assign anything beyond the brain as necessary to account for the phenomena of mind? Let us find out what matter *can* do, before we begin to say what it cannot. The spiritualist, on the contrary, reasons upon the same facts in a different strain. Here are thoughts, feelings, volitions, he urges, which have nothing in common with material changes, nothing with chemical processes; and what can the entire difference observable in the phenomena (which in the former case we cannot *conceive* to result from the mere collocation of material particles) indicate to us, but another and a spiritual substance, which we term mind?

Our consciousness only comes in direct contact with *phenomena* in either case. Matter is that unknown something which has extension, impenetrability, &c.; mind is that unknown something which has feeling, thought, volition. To say that *mind* is *matter* is to say, that what we know by one set of properties is the same thing as that which we know by another set. If we can only know matter by phenomena—this affirmation involves a contradiction in terms; but if, on the other hand, we contend that we can imagine, by an abstraction of the reason, a material essence to lie at the foundation of both series of phenomena—this is simply an hypothesis.

It appears, therefore, that these two explanations are in fact both of them *hypotheses*, either of which may be made to account for the facts of the case, but which we have to judge of in the absence of actual demonstration according to their relative *probability*. The dogmatical assumptions of absolute certainty so common on either side, as also the contemptuous imputations of absurdity, must be given up by the calm inquirer, and he must regard the case,



*when viewed simply by the light of the understanding*, as one which at present can only rest upon probable evidence. The whole of our attempt, then, in the present instance, is to estimate probabilities, which we shall accordingly do as carefully as possible.\*

Against the materialist hypothesis, then, there are various objections, which appear to every mind stronger just in proportion as it is less under the influence of the senses, and more under the influence of pure reason.

1. There is usually among this class of thinkers an entire neglect of the notion of *power* or *force*. We contend, that whenever changes take place in the material world, we have a distinct idea of power exerted in the production of the phenomena, over and above the mere co-existence of the objects. Any two material bodies, we know, tend to move towards each other; this is all we actually understand about the phenomenon; and we express our partial knowledge, and at the same time hide our ignorance, by saying that it takes place by the *law of gravitation*. But the *law* of gravitation, it is clear, cannot move a world or a particle; to do this requires *force*; neither can we possibly divest our minds of this notion, when we see hard, dull, inanimate matter, hurled through space, and made to perform complicated and harmonious revolutions. All *causes*, then, as implying power, are spiritual in their nature; we cannot possibly reduce them to the idea of matter; in fact, we never conceive of any force producing change, except under the type of the exertion and energy of our own will moving the material particles of our bodily frame.†

The existence of efficient causes, we are well aware, is very widely disputed; but in addition to their reality being distinctly asserted by the most philosophical minds of the age, we cannot but think that their truth is tacitly admitted by the whole spirit of physical research; to wit, by the perpetual effort that is made to discover *the process*, which goes on between any antecedent and its consequent. Take the case of digestion as an illustration of the principle we are affirming. The stomach is the organ or instrument in this process; but no one can suppose that it is *the cause*. There must be some *chemical force*, whose operation we very imperfectly understand, by which the change denoted by digestion is accomplished; and even if we were to get one step nearer than we are

\* We shall show soon, that upon a higher or transcendental principle of philosophy, the question of materialism and spiritualism assumes a very different form.

† This is clearly and forcibly stated by Sir John Herschel, in his "Preliminary Discourse," p. 86.

to the "modus operandi," we should still look for another yet more recondite, and so on, until we had attributed the "primum mobile," to a force of a purely spiritual kind. Universally, the *knots* or *joints* which unite phenomena are the grand subjects of physical investigation; it is here that we find more subtle essences in operation; here we discover new processes; neither will our reason permit us to rest until the senses are baffled, and we are obliged to admit the real existence of a power, which is, indeed, beyond our perception; but *rationally* cognizable by its effects. Materialists, from the habit they contract, of admitting nothing beyond what is visible and palpable, are ever in danger of confounding the *organ* of a function with the *cause*. They say, for example, that it is the stomach which digests, and the liver which secretes bile; which, in fact, is saying nothing at all beyond the fact, that these are *localities* in which such operations are carried on: but as to the principle of these operations, we must look for a *power* to which nothing material has the slightest resemblance, and the secret nature of which it is pretty certain we shall never fully understand in our present state of existence.

From the functions just mentioned, let us now turn to the functions performed by the brain. Here we see, that in connection with certain changes in the particles of the cerebrum, we experience thoughts, feelings, emotions, joys and sorrows, peace or excitement. The materialist says, that these molecular changes, or rather the various states of brain consequent upon them, and termed by him cerebration, *are* thoughts and feelings: but there is here an evident confounding of the instrument with the cause. Power there must assuredly be, in order that the prodigious effects of mind may be produced; for, to say nothing of the intellectual features of the case, there must be some force exerted, when the particles of the cerebrum of the nervous system, and of the sinews of the muscular frame, are thrown into movement. The only difference between this case and the former ones is, that in those purely physical operations, the force employed, as far as our observation goes, is perfectly recondite, that it acts without our perception, although, indeed, we can easily observe its effects. On the other hand, mental force is an object of direct consciousness; it is, in fact, the only force respecting which we have any knowledge of its mode of operation, and thus becomes the type by which we conceive of all other forces existing in nature.

We observe a movement in the digestive organs, and digestion

is the result. We know that some power must have been in operation, but we do not comprehend in what its nature consists. So, also, we observe a movement in the cerebral particles, and muscular movement follows; but here, unlike the former case, there is a *conscious* force, that of the will, which we feel to have been the more remote cause of the whole phenomenon. In brief, wherever we see change or motion, there we necessarily imagine some power adequate to the production of the effect. In digestion there is the digestive *power*, in animation there is the vital *power*, both known to exist, but unknown in their nature, except so far as it may be gathered from their effects. In the case of mind, then, we observe as effects, thoughts, feelings, emotions; and on the same principle we attribute these to a thinking power, a feeling power, and an emotive power, of which we are personally conscious, and which, whatever it may be, we term mind or soul in its various manifestations. *We conclude, therefore, that if all causes, of whatever nature, are spiritual, mind being a conscious and intelligent cause can lay, of all others, the first claim to have the notion of spirituality attached to it.*

If it be said that this view of the case would assert the existence of some spiritual essence wherever phenomena take place, and wherever power is displayed in nature, as well as in man, we admit the inference. All natural phenomena bear upon them the impress of a *divine spirit*. My own finite effort I attribute to the agency of my own finite mind, the infinite power that acts around me I attribute to the presence of the infinite mind. God is revealed in every natural phenomenon, as surely as self is revealed in every effort of the will. The one idea of spontaneity, personality, will, as the centre of movement and the source of power, is that which will forever baffle both the materialist and the atheist; it contains the germ of that belief which humanity ever has felt, and ever will maintain, in a *soul*, and in a *God*.

2. From what we have just said, it follows that materialists, in assigning a bodily organ as the principle of mind, do *not* give so clear an explanation of the facts of the case as those who hold the existence of spirit.

Here are certain intellectual phenomena, which all admit;—it is required to know how they come into existence. The materialist says, they are the direct result of certain movements in the brain. But this, in fact, is only evading the real question. How is it, we would ask, that the brain is subjected to these movements,

and what is the force employed in producing them? The materialist gives no satisfactory answer to this question, while the spiritualist assigns a real power or cause, which is amply equivalent to the observed effects. Both must admit a power of some kind; if the lobes of brain, for example, which subserve the faculty of memory, reasoning, or comparison, are excited, there must be some force or other employed; the one, accordingly, attempts no explanation of it; the other gives an explanation which, even though admitted hypothetical, is nevertheless highly probable and satisfactory.

3. The system of materialism, particularly that form of it, which assigns different functions to the various portions of the brain, does not even attempt to explain the psychological phenomena of the *will*. The operation of all the various organs is manifestly under some superior control. There is a power which either excites or represses the working of the faculties, and which is not at all taken into account by those, who regard the cerebrum as *an assemblage* of such faculties bound together by no perceptible tie. The will, to which we attribute this power, is an untiring energy, unimpaired either by labor or disease. Continued thought is always exhausting, and the indulgence of emotions is exhausting also; both of which facts would indicate that each of these processes is carried on by a material instrumentality; but the will is ever the same, the sense of personality never grows weary, is never lost by any kind of physical injury; and herein it is, therefore, that we should place the essence of mind, as an ever acting and ever unwearied source of energy and power. It should be observed, that we do not put forward these arguments as decisive of the case now under review, but merely as considerations which show that the materialist hypothesis is not so satisfactory and so capable of explaining all the facts we have before us, as it sometimes lays claim to; much less a theory which admits of those lofty pretensions to clearness and simplicity, which it sometimes assumes.

On the other hand, there are several considerations which tend much to strengthen the probability of the spiritualist hypothesis.

1. There is the *unity* which pervades all mental phenomena. However varied our thoughts, however complicated our emotions, however numerous our volitions, yet they are all referred by consciousness to one and the same individual self. To account for the unity of our conscious being is by no means easy upon the materialist hypothesis, whichever way it be viewed. Phrenologi-



cal materialism, the most rational of all, is completely baffled in explaining this phenomenon; inasmuch as it is impossible to show, in what manner a conscious unity can result from an assemblage of organs, each one of which thinks or feels for itself. If it be said, that there is something common to all the organs, by virtue of which they are felt to belong to the same being, then we ask what is this something which *is felt*, or what is this being which *feels*, independently of the cerebral parts, of which the materialist supposes it to consist. If they be referred to some material point in the centre of the brain, then this point is in fact the mind, the real self; and the brain is only the instrumentality by which it acts. Moreover, such a point, in order not to be divisible, must be an atom or a monad, and thus we are landed somewhere in the centre of the Leibnitzian philosophy, the tendency of which, when made intelligible, is to support an ideal or dynamical theory of the creation.\* But if it be supposed that there is something in common actually in contact with all the organs, by virtue of which there is a felt connection between them, then it were well to consider whether this is possible or intelligible except on the hypothesis of a spiritual principle, which manifests itself in and through the cerebral organization. If the materialist, however, still further should take up the principle, that the whole brain thinks, just as the whole stomach digests, then we ask how can the juxtaposition of particles, not one of which has the property of thought, at length come to create it? Is there any imaginable correspondence between such juxtaposition as cause, and thoughts or pleasures or pains as effects; and can a mere movement of the brain, without any other force being implied, be rationally supposed to wield the strong and nervous muscles of the human body? The answer to this brings us to another remark in favor of spiritualism, namely,

2. That it assigns a more adequate cause to account for the given effects.

The whole nature of mental phenomena is such, that it does far less violence to our reason to suppose that a spiritual principle is in operation within us, than to rest satisfied with the notion, that the matter itself, of which the brain is composed, can think, or feel, or of itself produce physical exertion. Where there must be an hypothesis of some kind, it is by far better to accept that,

\* "Si vous admettez l'atome absolu, il faut admettre en lui la possibilité de la manifestation de la pensée sous peine de tomber dans une pétition de principes: car ce n'est que dans l'impossibilité de concevoir la pensée dans cet atome, qu'un principe d'une autre nature doit être admis." See Tissot's "Anthropologie," vol. ii. p. 353.

which appears most adequate, especially if, instead of straining and wrenching our fundamental notions of material properties, it offers a plain and simple solution of the facts which come before us.

The properties of matter in all its varied forms are extension and resistance ; on the other hand, as far as experience goes, there is in it a total negation of thought and consciousness ; and this being the case, it is only by stripping it of all which we have before known it to possess, and adding that which was never before regarded as one of its properties, that we can come to the conclusion, that matter, or any combination of matter either thinks or feels.

3. The idea of the spirituality of mind better comports with the notions which mankind have ever entertained of its immortality. We would by no means represent the properties of spirituality and immortality as being so closely connected, that the one necessarily implies the other. There is nothing absurd in the notion of a material existence being eternal, or a spiritual one being perishable, if such be the will of the Creator ; nevertheless, if there be any grounds, on which to look forward to a future life, it is unquestionably that the idea of a spiritual mind better comports with such a prospect, than that of a mind which results from material organization ; and on this ground, the whole of the separate evidence for the immortality of the soul goes to strengthen the evidence for its spirituality. Putting, then, all these remarks together, we deny that there is any superior clearness in the materialist hypothesis ; that it gets rid of a single difficulty ; that it has peculiarly the suffrages of common sense ; or that it is successful in explaining the phenomena for which we have to account. On the contrary, we affirm that the spiritual hypothesis is equally comprehensible ; that it is in much better keeping with the unity of our thoughts, feelings, and volitions ; that it assigns a far more adequate cause to produce the given effects ; and, lastly, that it comports better with the dignity and immortality of human nature. Setting, therefore, both hypotheses before us, and estimating their relative *probabilities*, we have no hesitation in rejecting materialism, and still holding to that spirituality which we may term the common belief of mankind.

We have conducted the above argumentation on the principle of Jouffroy, (Pref. to Stewart,) simply from the stand-point of the understanding, supposing the ordinary conception of matter and mind to be valid *really* as well as phenomenally. To us, however

it appears evident, that the whole tendency of philosophy, from the time of Leibnitz, has been to bring us nearer and nearer to a purely dynamical theory of the whole universe. The idea of matter is the most dark, indefinite, unmeaning of all ideas, except we consider it in connection with certain of its attributes, *i. e.* as ever exerting certain *powers*. By the mechanist, matter is measured and reasoned upon simply in the light of a power; the chemist in the last analysis sees only centres of forces; the philosopher knows the me and the not-me, simply under the law of a mutual action and reaction; and even in natural theology, the only truly conceivable notion we can form of the act of creation, is that of the Divine power and thought going forth to the production of form in the wondrous processes of nature and mind. That the *phenomena* we term material must ever exist is self-evident; that they indicate a substratum is equally certain; but that the real philosophic analysis of this substratum will bring us to no other result than that of an action and reaction of forces, appears to me to amount almost to a demonstration. The universe in this light appears far more simple, more harmonious, more beautiful. Instead of a dualism encumbered with metaphysical paradox, we have an homogeneous creation, together with the activities of which it is composed, rising in perfect gradation from the lowest forms of matter, through all the regions of organic life, to the highest development of mind itself.

On these principles, power acting unconsciously and blindly, is matter—power raised to intelligence and volition is spirit. The substratum of both is identical, but there exists in their most inward nature determinations which result in phenomenal differences—differences which will ever be marked and distinguished by the language of Dualism; because ordinary language is always based upon phenomena, and not upon a refined metaphysical analysis.

“The materialists and the spiritualists,” says M. Tissot, “ought in general to probe more deeply than they have done the notion of matter; they would then have been forced on either side into their last intrenchments; would have discovered the point of intersection of material and physical phenomena; and consequently the point of view under which matter and spirit resemble each other and are identical, as well as that in which they are distinguished. It is only on this condition that agreement is possible; without this, men will dispute eternally, everybody being right and everybody being wrong at the same time. Every one will be wrong in this

sense, that he will ignore on the other side the facts which he ought to accept without restriction, and of which it would be necessary also to admit the consequences. Every one would be right in this other sense, that having laid down the exclusive point of view by which he reasons, he will come to reject necessarily every other hypothesis.\*

## SECT. II.—*Modern Sensationalism in France.*

In the brief sketch we gave of the progress of sensationalism in France during the eighteenth century, we traced the development, and the various transformations of the philosophy of Locke through a succession of writers, who, while they popularized and adorned the school to which they belonged, by a clearness and a brilliancy of style which has been seldom equalled, and perhaps never excelled, yet shrank not from asserting and maintaining the most startling conclusions of materialism. All the mental operations were reduced by them simply to various forms of sensation; morals became a mere balancing of self-interest; the mind was regarded as the result of organization alone, to which it was absurd to ascribe the idea of immortality; while the name of God was made synonymous with nature, or altogether disowned. These principles we followed in their course up to the period of the Revolution, which for a time absorbed the attention of every mind, bore along even the calmest thinkers with it in its fury, and allowed them no leisure, and perhaps no disposition, to reflect upon the more abstruse subjects of philosophy. No sooner, however, did the excitement of that stupendous event begin to abate, than the purely philosophical element, which had for a time been lost in the political confusion, began to re-appear, and to excite a portion, though at first by no means a considerable portion, of public attention.

There was one spot in the vicinity of Paris which may be marked out as peculiarly the cradle of the rising philosophical spirit, and in which all those, whose names hold any prominent place in these early endeavors to revive the genius of Condillac, nurtured their young attempts. It was at Auteuil that the chief promoters of these studies regularly met together, to discuss the most important philosophical problems; it was there that Cabanis, Garat, Destutt de Tracy, Volney, Maine de Biran, and others, ma-

\* *Anthropologie*, vol. ii. p. 356.



tured, in conjunction with each other, many of the theories which made so brilliant a début in the philosophical world, and excited, to so considerable a degree, the attention of metaphysicians throughout Europe.

Without dwelling, however, upon the more general features of sensationalism in its first appearance after the Revolution, we shall proceed at once to take a rapid view of the writings of those, who gave it all its celebrity and its value. And in doing so, we cannot but remark, as a somewhat singular fact, that the four men, who not only stand at the head of this philosophy, (usually termed by themselves *ideology*,) but whose writings compose almost the whole of the accredited works of that school, were born, two of them in the same year, and the other two within a very short period before or after. Cabanis and Volney were born in the year 1757, Destutt de Tracy in 1754, and Garat in 1758.

Cabanis, to whom we must first direct our attention, had been in his early life both a disciple and a personal friend of Condillac. Under his guidance and tuition he had studied the philosophy of Locke, and had fully entered into the method, by which his French commentator attempted to complete it. All we know of Cabanis, therefore, before the Revolution is, that he was a professed adherent to Condillac's philosophical opinions; and that, in accordance with them, he must have regarded all the active operations of the mind simply as forms of the one great sensitive faculty. When the events of the Revolution burst upon the country, Cabanis was called to take his full share in them. He was the intimate friend of Mirabeau during his mad career; he was his physician in sickness, and conducted the examination of the body after death. Equally intimate was he with Condorcet, whose sister-in-law he afterwards married; and it is confidently affirmed that he prepared the poison, with which that remarkable and much persecuted man terminated his life. In the third year of the republic he was appointed professor of medicine in Paris, and soon after was elected member of the National Institute. The study of philosophy had always been more congenial to the mind of Cabanis than that of his own profession, and he now applied his mind to the preparation of no less than twelve different *Mémoires*, which were read at the Institute, and published in 1802, under the title of "*Traité du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme*."\*

\* A second edition was afterwards published, with tables and indices, by M. Destutt de Tracy, under the title of "*Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme*." (Paris, 1805.)

In this work Cabanis sought to complete the philosophy of Condillac, or rather to pursue that of Locke onwards, from the point at which he considered Condillac had stopped short. Locke had proved, as was *then* generally admitted, the sensational origin of all our ideas; Condillac, proceeding one step further, had shown in what manner all the various mental operations, by which our ideas are modified, such as memory, judgment, abstraction, and others, might be philosophically reduced to sensation in its various transformations. Cabanis now proposed to investigate the nature and origin of *sensation* itself, and thus to furnish a clear deduction of all our intellectual notions, as well as moral feelings, from the primary movements of our physical constitution. The result of these investigations was a theory, which from its extreme simplicity can be explained in a very few words.

The nervous system he considered to be the seat and the cause of all sensation, inasmuch as any part of the body becomes altogether insensible the very instant the nerves, which reside there, are severed from the rest of the system, of which they form a part.\* When an impression is made by an external object upon any of these nerves, it is instantly conveyed to the central organ. From this a reaction takes place, by which the impression is reconveyed to the extremities. This action and reaction, he showed, must both exist, ere the sentiment or the impulse intended to be produced can take place.† The whole process, then, of our intellectual as well as of our moral feelings, Cabanis considered to be here developed with the most consecutive clearness and certainty. The moral feelings, the intellect, the will, all the various faculties and emotions of the mind, were, on Condillac's principles, clearly reducible to sensation; but sensation he now proved to be an affection of the nerves: the inference was, that it is in the nerves alone, that the whole man consists—"Les nerfs voilà tout l'homme." Such was the ultimate idea in which his philosophy terminated.

These extreme opinions excite in us the less surprise, when we consider that Cabanis had been nurtured in the materialistic school of the French Encyclopædists; so far, indeed, from seeing in him any bold attempts to carry out the principles of his masters beyond their legitimate application, we clearly recognize in the admitted reaction of the central organ a shrinking back from the hardihood,

\* Cabanis takes his primary principles for granted, without appearing to imagine the very necessity of a proof. The full statement of his views on this point, are contained in the second *Mémoire*, sec. 2.

† *Mém.* ii. Sections 6 and 7.

with which some had maintained the grossest aspect of materialism. We can trace, in fact, three shades of opinion amongst the physiologists of that age, respecting the origin and nature of mental phenomena. Some, like Helvetius, D'Holbach, &c., admitted nothing whatever, but a physical organism acted on by external agencies, and explained all the facts of mind by means of this passive sensibility. Others, of whom Bichat was the representative, maintained the existence of certain vital properties, to the action of which the phenomena of the passions and the understanding are to be referred. Cabanis proceeded a step further towards spiritualism; he not only admitted certain *vital properties* in connection with our organization, but was forced here and there into the avowal that the principle of life is something real, *over and above the organs and their properties*.<sup>\*</sup> Strange that he should have admitted a spiritual principle to account for the phenomena of life, and denied it with respect to those of intelligence! This is the more to be wondered at, as Cabanis draws out the parallel between the action of the stomach in digestion, and that of the brain in thinking. The impressions from without are the material—the food, if it may be so termed, of the brain. The properties of the brain react upon them, as the gastric juice does upon our natural food; and then we *secrete thought*. But how he can make clear the transformation of nervous irritation into thoughts and feelings—how he can imagine the phenomena of mind to be in any sense forms of organic processes, how he can instance a comparison between the shakings of a fluid and intellectual facts, as though they could be essentially the same, only regarded from a different point of view—it is left for us to comprehend as best we are able.<sup>†</sup>

In the meantime, however, Cabanis was not behindhand in supporting his theory, by collateral evidences, with great talent and ingenuity. He showed most clearly, how dependent our intellectual development and moral feelings are upon a crowd of external circumstances; how they are modified by age, by sex, by natural temperament, by food, by climate, by a hundred other things of a purely physical nature.<sup>‡</sup> The argument derived from hence was

\* Quelque idée, que l'on adopte sur la cause qui détermine l'organisation, on ne peut s'empêcher d'admettre un principe que la nature fixe ou répand dans les liqueurs séminales.—Mémoire iv. sec. 1.

† See Dictionnaire Philosophique, Art. Cabanis—also an excellent critique on Cabanis by Tissot, Anthropologie, Book II. Chap. ii. sec. 2.

‡ The influence of Age upon mind, is discussed in Mémoire iv.; that of Sex in Mém. v.; that of Temperament in Mém. vi.; that of Disease in Mém. vii.; that of Habits (régime) in Mém. viii.; and finally, that of Climate in Mém. ix.

manifest. The various changes of the external world, and the different states of body, it was argued, operate upon the nerves; and the nerves, in accordance with these influences, give rise to all the varieties of mental and moral constitution observable between different races and different classes of mankind. Find out, then, by observation, all the external causes by which the nervous system is influenced, and you have, at the same time, all the elements which enter into our mental or moral nature, as well as the primary source, from which all their phenomena are derived. The simplicity of this theory, the ease with which it could be grasped by all minds, however deficient in philosophical acumen, the popular elegance with which it was conveyed, all tended to give it a very extensive reputation. "The physicians," says one of his French commentators,\* "accorded their thanks to the author for the learned physiological explication which he gave them of man's moral nature; the philosophers, even those who did not adopt his theory, were delighted with the relations he unfolded between the mind and the body; the half-learned hoped by his means to acquire two sciences at once—physiology and psychology; and every one profited, or thought that they profited, by his ideas."

Notwithstanding this success, however, Cabanis, who appears to have been an honest investigator of truth, saw reason, after a time, to shrink from his own system, and distrust his own conclusions. His view seemed gradually to veer round as he studied the subject less as a physiologist and more as a philosopher: added to this, he had too deep a sense of the sanctity both of morals and religion, to leave them open to the light esteem, if not contempt, which his own principles seemed to foster. In a second work, accordingly, which was published after his death, and which he terms "A Letter upon Primary Causes," we find him departing very decidedly from his original notions, and manifesting a retrograde tendency towards spiritualism in all the three departments of psychology, morals, and theology.† With regard to the soul, he now asserts, that it cannot consist solely in the nervous system, but that there must be a distinct and separate existence, by which the movements of our physical constitution are regulated and rendered in-

\* Damiron—*Hist. de la Phil. de xix<sup>me</sup> Siècle*, vol. i. p. 93.

† In the year 1805, Cabanis, it appears, became intimate with a M. Fauviel, a young man, who to great abilities added an earnest love for the Stoical philosophy. Through this friendship, he appears to have been led to relinquish his sensational opinions in favor of spiritualism. The letter referred to, was published by M. Bérard in 1824, under the title "*Lettre à M. F. sur les Causes Premières*," and accompanied with notes by the Editor.



telligent. In fact, he carries out the notion, which he before applied to the explanation of vital phenomena, to the phenomena of consciousness, and ends in the admission of a thinking principle, an indivisible self. The moral faculty, moreover, he now saw reason to distinguish altogether from our bodily organization, as giving rise to an order of feelings and sentiments quite peculiar in their kind, and to which no mere sensation could offer any approach; while, with regard to religion, he enters a strong and earnest protest against the reigning atheism of his time, avowing his belief, as he expresses it, "with the great Bacon, that, in order to deny in a formal and positive manner the existence of a primary cause, we must be as credulous as those, who admit the fables of mythology and the Talmud." Perhaps there is no other writer who gives in himself so complete an illustration as Cabanis, of the diversified shades of French philosophy from the time of Condillac to the rise of eclecticism. First of all, we see him advocating the sentiments of Condillac, his friend and master; next we find him standing at the head of the materialist school, by which the opening of the present century was characterized; and lastly, in his posthumous writings, we view the germs of those truer and better principles by which materialism itself was destined so soon to be supplanted and destroyed. The literary life of Cabanis alone would furnish us with a history, tolerably complete, of the chief metaphysical systems of France in the last and the present century.

The rise of the normal schools, and especially the formation of the National Institute in the fourth year of the republic, gave a very considerable stimulus to the study of mental philosophy, as well as the other sciences, in France. At the head of the philosophical department of the former stood Garat—a man less known as a writer, than as a most celebrated lecturer and successful supporter of Condillac's metaphysical principles. The only original source from which we can now gain any knowledge of his lectures, is to be found in the archives of the normal schools, among which there are several volumes of philosophy from his pen. His general sentiments, however, are sufficiently known, inasmuch as to him mainly is due the increased attention which was paid during the first decade of the present century, to philosophical questions in France. Of a far more cautious spirit than many of his predecessors, Garat confined his lectures to a comparatively small range of subjects. For the doctrines of ideology, properly so called, he argued with great power, and no inconsiderable depth.

with a clearness not unworthy of Condillac himself, he attempted to establish sensational perception as the basis of all our faculties; and in his programme of questions to be treated of in the normal schools, he furnished a plan of philosophical investigation, as consecutive in its parts, as it was symmetrical in its whole structure. For the application, however, of these principles to other points of great importance, we look in vain to the lessons of our author. He was too prudent either to carry out morality to self-interest, or sensationalism to materialism; and too wise, after the scenes he had witnessed during the Revolution, to draw any inferences that might be detrimental to the re-establishment of religious faith. As Cabanis was the physiologist of his school, so Garat was the sober and cautious professor, adapting his instructions to the youthful mind, repressing their too great tendency to bold speculation, and saving the interests of morality and religion at the expense of advocating a narrowed and unimposing system of sensationalism.\*

Very different, in almost every respect, was the character of Volney, whom we must regard as the *moralist* of the ideological school. Volney was a bold follower in the footsteps of the Baron d'Holbach (to whose work, entitled "*Système de la Nature*," we have already referred), and has won celebrity as an ethical philosopher, not so much from the originality or depth of any of his views, as from the authorship of a catechism, where the principles of his school were briefly and clearly digested, and which came into general use among those, who preferred the morals of infidelity to those of the Bible.† Following the opinions of that class of philosophers, who saw in man nothing but an organized mass, who considered the nervous system to be the sum total of human nature, who acknowledged no existence but matter, and no enjoyments but those of sense, it was natural, nay unavoidable, that his moral system should be based entirely upon pleasures and pains, aiming simply at the attainment of the one, and the avoidance of the other.

The fundamental idea accordingly, of Volney's moral philosophy, is *preservation*—the preservation of our bodily frame, and our other external relations, in such a degree of perfection, as to afford

\* The works of Garat are not easily accessible. My information on them is chiefly due to M. Damiron's "*Hist. de la Phil. en France*," which contains a brief sketch of his life and labors.

† It is entitled "*La Loi Naturelle, ou Catéchisme du Citoyen Français*," (12mo. Paris, l'an deuxième de la République.)

us the greatest amount of physical pleasure.\* He knew no evil besides death, and that which tends to it ; no good besides life, and the external pleasures it affords, and had no conception of moral obligation, beyond the duty of living so as to defer pain and death as long as possible, and secure as much as might be allowed of life, health, and outward comfort.† In so far as virtue, sobriety, moderation, chastity, and the like, tend to the preservation of life, and the promotion of health, he enforced their observance, and in so far as the social and domestic duties add, in the long run, to our security, peace, and tranquillity, he enjoined them as worthy our approbation and pursuit ; but he considered no virtue to be a good abstracted from its influence upon our sensual happiness, and no vice to be an evil, if unaccompanied by its penalties and pains.‡ In a word, he regarded man simply as an animal ; the whole of his moral code aimed professedly at the preservation of his animal nature ; neither did he shrink from defending murder itself as a virtue, wherever it tends to our security or defence. In such a system as this, it is needless to say that the higher moral feelings were completely lost sight of ; that everything disinterested was condemned as folly, and that the obligations of religion were set down as fit only for the dupes of priestcraft and superstition. In representing Volney, however, as the moralist of the ideological school, we should be far from affirming, that the rest of its supporters went similar lengths with regard to their contempt for religion, or that they would have so completely sunk every nobler feeling of our nature in the mire of selfishness. Still we have unquestionably in him a complete illustration of the morality to which sensationalism *naturally* leads ; while his catechism presents an instructive specimen of that moral arithmetic which, employing pleasures and pains as the ciphers, would *calculate* all the duties and obligations of human life.§

In the writings of the three preceding authors, whom we have

\* Take the following specimen of the Catéchisme,—

Q. Développez-moi les principes de la loi naturelle par rapport à l'homme.

A. Ils sont simples ; ils se réduisent à un précepte fondamental et unique.

Q. Quel este ce précepte ?

A. C'est la *conservation* de soi-même.

† Cat. chap. iv.

‡ Cat. chaps. vi. vii.

§ Volney sums up his *Ethics* in the following words,—

“ Toute sagesse, toute perfection, toute loi, toute vertu, toute philosophie, consistent dans la pratique de ces axiomes fondés sur notre propre organisation :—

“ Conserve-toi,

“ Instruis-toi,

“ Modère-toi ;

“ Vis pour tes semblables ; afin qu'ils vivent pour toi.

noticed, there are easily recognized many qualities of mind which eminently fitted them for some branches of philosophical research, and which naturally gained for them a due share both of fame and influence with the public. The close observation of Cabanis, the clear arrangement of Garat, the logical order and brevity of Volney, amounting almost to the algebraical form of expression, all gave a great force and a great popularity to the ideas they advocated; but there was yet a philosopher, living and laboring among them, who, if inferior in some other respects, still united in himself a power of analysis, a faculty of metaphysical abstraction, and an irrefragable logic, which has given him without doubt the first place among the sensationalists of his age. M. Destutt de Tracy, to whom we now refer, was of noble birth under the old régime, and brought up originally to the military profession. At the breaking out of the Revolution he entered warmly into the cause of liberty, but at the fall of the crown retired into Auteuil, where he devoted himself chiefly to natural philosophy. Dragged from his peaceful abode during the Reign of Terror, he was thrown into prison, and there beguiled the lonesome hours, when no other objects of interest were around him, by studying the processes of his own mind. On his release, he became a senator as well as a member of the "Institut National," and at the restoration was raised to the dignity of a peer of France. He died in 1836, admired by all for his literary ability, his ardent patriotism, and his public virtue.

It is to M. Destutt de Tracy that the wide-spread fame of ideology is mainly due, and from his writings that its real philosophical character is almost universally estimated. There is in the whole theory of this author, the same simplicity, the same exactness, the same clear precision, that we find in those to whom we have already referred; but there is also a power of reasoning, and a depth of thought, both in analysis and in generalization, which gives him a right to the honor of being, *par excellence*, the *metaphysician* of his school.\* One fault, however, is still apparent among his many better qualities, and that is a deficiency in the faculty of subjective observation, and a consequent indisposition to recur to the data upon which his first principles rested. Give him his data ready made, and his all-embracing logic builds you a superstructure, which seems as perfect as it is beautiful; but the truth is, perhaps, altogether lost sight of, that philosophical structures, as

\* Damiron's "Hist. de la Phil." vol. i. p. 99.



well as all others, must have foundations, which, if not laid firmly and cautiously, soon endanger the whole building. For first principles, M. Destutt de Tracy had recourse simply to his predecessors, following Condillac and Cabanis, the one in his psychological, the other in his physiological investigations. Having thence taken his start, he carries on his work with admirable precision, embracing everything important as he proceeds, until you see a whole system, in which nothing seems wanting till you examine the basis upon which it all reposes.\*

To illustrate, however, and justify these remarks, we shall just glance at the course of reasoning our author pursues in his "Éléments d'Idéologie," a work which has given its name to the system it upholds. First of all, we must premise, that the doctrine of Cabanis is there fully accepted—a doctrine which supposes all sensation to result directly from the action of the nervous system, nay, which regards the nerves and the mind as synonymous terms, the one being the physiological, the other the psychological expression for the same thing.† Next, the well-known theory of Condillac, to which we have so often made allusion, is elaborately upheld, according to which, thought, feeling, and all the varieties of the moral sentiments, are but different variations of sensation. These may be regarded as the fundamental principles of the whole work, and it is in the full development of them, more particularly of the latter, that M. de Tracy has manifested the power and fertility of his mind.

In carrying out this development, he shows that the sensitive faculty, with which we are endowed as the basis of our intellectual life, is susceptible of a great variety of impressions, of different kinds and of different intensities. These impressions may be reduced to four distinct species. There are, first, those which result simply from the *direct* action of an external object upon the nerves, and which are ordinarily termed *sensations* or *perceptions*. Secondly, there are impressions, which are derived from objects not directly, but indirectly, which result not from their actual presence, but from their past action, and from the effect they have left be-

\* \* M. Dest. de Tracy's philosophical works are contained in 2 vols., with the general title of "Projet d'Éléments d'Idéologie." They comprehend the Idéologie properly so called, a "Grammaire Générale" containing the theory of language, a "Logique" for explaining the processes of reasoning, and lastly, a "Traité de la Volonté." He published also a commentary on the "Esprit des Lois."

† Idéologie, chap. ii. His definition of sensation runs as follows:—"La sensibilité est cette faculté, ce pouvoir, cet effet de notre organisation, ou, si vous voulez, cette propriété de notre être, en vertu de laquelle nous recevons des impressions, de beaucoup d'espèces, et nous en avons la conscience." p. 39.

hind them upon the nervous system: these account for all the phenomena of *memory* and *conception*. Thirdly, there are impressions produced upon us by two or more objects or sensations, that have certain *relations* to each other; which impressions, from the fact of their embodying relations, we usually term *judgments* of the mind. And lastly, there are impressions which result from certain physical feelings of want or of danger, of pleasure to be gained or pain to be avoided, and which lead us instinctively to perform the peculiar actions by which such impulses may be satisfied. Hence result the emotions, desires, and passions, which play so large a part in the economy of human nature.\* In this way the phenomena of perception, of memory, of reason, of emotion, are all reduced to the one element of sensation, and sensation itself to the action of the nerves as stimulated by the various circumstances of the external world. Setting aside the consideration that the whole theory lacks a sound basis, we cannot but admire the clearness and the ingenuity with which the author, in a small work of some 350 pages, has developed all the main points connected with the analysis of the human mind. In the first eight chapters, he disposes of the whole subject of the intellectual powers, reducing them as we have said to the one fact of sensation; in the next three he shows the application of the principles established, to the knowledge of the properties of bodies; and in the last six, develops the doctrine of the will, and shows the results which flow from the combination of the intellectual and voluntary phenomena in human nature.

We shall not stop now to point out particularly, the deficiencies which the system advocated by M. de Tracy, notwithstanding all its ingenuity and consecutiveness, presents; nor attempt to show how he has passed over, or only half explained such phenomena as those of abstraction and generalization, the power of the will and the peculiarity of the moral emotions. Instead of this, we shall rather offer a brief critique upon the ideological philosophy in general, as it appears upon the pages of the four eminent men whom we above enumerated, and to whom its celebrity throughout Europe is almost entirely due. The materialism of Cabanis, however, we must remind our readers, does not attach to ideology as a

\* Nous avons déjà remarqué, que nous avions des idées ou perceptions, de quatre espèces différents. Je sens, que je me brûle actuellement; c'est une sensation que je sens. Je me rappelle, que je me suis brûlé hier; c'est un souvenir que je sens. Je juge que c'est un tel corps, qui est cause de ma brûlure; c'est un rapport que je sens entre ce corps et ma douleur. Je veux éloigner ce corps, c'est un desir, que je sens. Voilà quatre *sentiments*, ou pour parler de langage ordinaire quatre idées, qui ont des caractères bien distincts."—"Idéologie," p. 37.

system, and therefore is more properly left out in the objections we shall now advance. The lectures of Garat, the ethics of Volney, and the logical deductions of Destutt de Tracy, will equally hold good, whatever theory we accept to account for the phenomena of sensation itself. The great problem, rather, which these philosophers attempt to work is, to adduce from sensation, as an ultimate fact, all the phenomena of our intellectual and moral life; and therefore, leaving for the present the endeavors, which some of them have made to reduce sensation to physical processes, we shall simply point out, in what respects they appear to us as a whole, to come short of any satisfactory solution of the point, upon which they have expended so much argument and ability.

1. We maintain that the French ideology does not explain the facts of the human *understanding*. The distinction between the sense-perceptions which arise involuntarily from the presence of an external object, and those active operations of the intellect which we carry on, when quite abstracted from the world without, is so obvious, that the two have never been confounded by any, except those who have had a preconceived theory to support. Memory, it is true, may be the memory of a sensation, but it is not the thing remembered; it is the power of recalling the thing, that has to be accounted for in our analysis of this faculty, and which, especially in the case of voluntary memory or recollection, is not at all explained by terming it a prolonged sensation. A prolonged sensation would be as passive throughout its whole duration as a sudden one; in recollection, on the other hand, the mind, from a purpose and impulse of its own, casts around for every spring of association, in order to call up the notion it requires. In any case of memory, indeed, the distinction between the mere passive and receptive state indicated by sensation, is perfectly distinct from the active operation of which we are conscious in recalling a past fact of our mental history from its apparent oblivion.

Judgment, again, may involve the simultaneous perception of two objects holding a certain relation to each other, but the perception of the objects themselves, and the estimating their *relations*, are two processes altogether different. I may perceive two things to-day without passing any judgment upon their relations, and to-morrow I may have precisely the same perception of them, and append to it a mental comparison of the two, which I am conscious, is an act, and sometimes a very complicated act, of my own understanding. Still less has the system we are considering

been able to explain the more complex facts of generalization and abstraction, and the lofty creations of imagination. That an abstract idea, or a general term, or a glowing fancy-picture, can be produced by the same means, and by the same process as the ordinary sensations we experience of actual existences around us, is intelligible on no other principle than that of an ultra idealism, according to which the so-termed real as well as unreal world, are both alike the creations of our own subjective self.

If we pass from the consideration of our faculties, to that of our more refined notions and intuitive ideas, here, again, the impossibility of accounting for the facts of the case upon the sensational principles we are opposing, meets us with equal decision. By what means, we ask, do we acquire the notions of time and space? If we suppose them, on the one hand, to be purely supersensual ideas, then we must have some rational faculty to grasp them, inasmuch as sensation can only take cognizance of the various modifications of matter; or if, on the other hand, we suppose them, with Locke, to be abstractions from our sensations, yet still we must have the power of abstracting them, which is a process altogether different from that of sensation itself, and one which it is impossible to reduce to the same elements. Whence, again, do we acquire our belief in the external world? If you say, from sensation,—then beware lest some sceptical philosopher, like Hume, plunge you in a sea of doubt respecting the reality of your sense-perceptions; a situation from which you are quite sure never to be extricated until you admit some principle of primary belief, or some original dictate of common sense prior to experience, from which you may gain a firm conviction, that the judgments you pass upon your sensations, respecting the material world, are valid. Further, we might inquire, from what source we draw our notions of power, of cause and effect, and some others of a similar nature. The reduction of these to the level of sense and experience, as Hume has shown by a process of irrefragable logic, would in the end reduce creation to chance, religion to folly, and all mankind to atheism. We urge, therefore, on these grounds, (and many more might be enumerated,) the incapacity there is in the ideological philosophy, to account for the most palpable *facts* of the human understanding. Physiological experience itself tells us, that when certain stimuli urge any function into operation, they may give rise to an action generically different from those stimuli themselves; and by the same analogy we can conclude that the mental



excitement afforded by sensation may *possibly* give occasion to an intellectual action which, in its nature, altogether differs from it; while actual observation raises that possibility into a sure and certain fact.

2. The sensational system we are considering, does not account for the power of the will. There is in man a source of power—a secret spring of action, of which every one is conscious, and upon the consciousness of which every one acts—that we call *self*. In whatever light we view our nature, we find such an invisible energy, which cannot be accounted for upon any mechanical principles, playing an important part in the whole of our conscious existence.

If we study man physiologically, we must necessarily suppose a self before we can account for the phenomena of muscular action, which every hour presents. Cabanis himself, as we have before remarked, although in his former publication he had denied the existence of anything beyond the nervous system, was obliged afterwards to admit some real and distinct *unity*, without which he perceived it to be quite impossible to explain the formation, the animation, and the preservation even of our material frame. Undoubtedly it might be urged, that the influence of a kind of animal instinct may account for many of the actions of man, as well as those of the brutes; but there is within ourselves, in addition to this, a higher power, which is superior to sense, which subdues the very force of our instincts, which leads us perpetually to oppose and thwart our mere animal nature, and which, so far from being synonymous with instinct, is possessed in an infinite variety of intensity by men of the same bodily temperament and the same natural propensities.\*

If, again, we regard man as an *intelligent* being, here, also, we find the will operating in every faculty we exercise. The power of attention is nothing more or less than the will exerting itself in modifying or prolonging the trains of thought—trains which are, in fact, never left to themselves uncontrolled, except in the hours of sleep, reverie, or of mental disease.† The same voluntary energy explains the rise of many of our fundamental ideas; it gives

\* See a small Tractate, by John Barlow, A.M., "On the Connection between Physiology and Mental Philosophy."

† Cabanis admits the fact of attention, as one of the modifying conditions of the sensational organs. "C'est l'attention de l'organe sensitif, qui met les extrémités nerveuses en état de recevoir ou de leur transmettre l'impression tout entière." Strange that he never thought of asking what the *attention* of the sensitive organ involved. Assuredly it implies something more than mere passive sensation itself.

us all the notion we have of *power*, and consequently of *causality*: it lies at the foundation of human liberty, and is therefore the corner-stone of all moral responsibility. Of this great agent in our conscious existence, sensationalism, as held by the philosophers now under our consideration, can render no account. M. Destutt de Tracy, indeed, affirms a liberty in man, which he terms the *power to act*—that is, the power of performing mechanical actions in obedience to the investigation of our nervous system; but this is by no means an adequate explanation of the facts of the case. Whence comes the *determination* to act upon certain fixed principles; whence the design that points at the accomplishment of great objects; whence the energy which, in the pursuit of its purposes, overcomes the allurements of sense, breaks down all the barriers of our propensities, and despises weariness, suffering, and death itself, in comparison with the fulfilment of the moral laws, to which it owes eternal allegiance? Here are questions on which our author is silent—here facts of daily life, to which his whole system affords no solution.

3. We urge still further, that the French ideology does not account for the *emotions* of our nature. It commits an error in the outset by confounding our emotional feelings with those which are purely sensational. In sensation there is no intellectual action whatever; the mind is then existing merely in a receptive state; that is, it is simply feeling the impressions which, according to its constitution, things from without are capable of making upon it. Emotions, on the contrary, arise from some actual notion or conception, which has been formed by the exercise of the intellect, and which produces, according to its nature, corresponding feelings or impulses in the mind. Every one can easily distinguish the generic difference between the pleasurable feeling we derive from the taste of an apple, and that which we derive from the occurrence of some auspicious event; or between the painful feeling arising from a grating sound, and that arising from any circumstance which inspires us with fear or dread. The former class of feelings come from a material cause, and cease the instant their cause is removed; the latter arise from our *inward* perception of something relating to our own interests, from a purely intellectual idea, involving good or evil to ourselves. These fundamental distinctions are in the philosophy now before our attention altogether confounded, and the nervous system is made so excessively and incredibly sensitive, that it can shrink at an evil, or thrill at a

prospect that may be realized a year, or perchance ten years hence.

Of all the emotions, however, those which come under the province of æsthetics are the least satisfactorily explained. On the ideological principles, the emotion of beauty can be nothing more than a peculiar kind of sensation, produced by a peculiar kind of outward object. Now we do not at all deny that the emotion in question does really arise with the presence of certain objects, termed beautiful; but if we analyze this emotion, we see that it contains an element in it quite different from that which is here supposed. We judge of beauty, whether it be in poetry, or painting, or nature, according to some internal model of perfection—some beau-ideal which exists only in our own minds; and we term a thing beautiful or not, according to its greater or less resemblance to this standard. We never see a *perfect* model of beauty, either in art or nature, and never, therefore, perceive our beau-ideal embodied in the beau-real; on the contrary, however lovely any actual form may be, there is ever “aliquid immensum infinitumque,” some pure abstraction of perfection immeasurable and infinite in its nature, that still transcends it, and lies at the foundation of all the higher exercise of taste and fancy. Again, we say then, that the ideological school altogether fails of a theory, upon which it is possible to explain all that is peculiar to the emotions of the sublime and the beautiful.

4. We urge, lastly, that the system we are opposing does not account for the facts of our moral and religious nature. The foundation of all morality, according to these philosophers, is utility in the very lowest sense of the term; and the aim of all duty is the preservation of our physical enjoyment. These, we affirm, are the morals that are exactly fitted for an animal, which derives all its happiness from sense, and has no wish beyond the satisfaction of its bodily instincts. Viewing man in this light, the catechism of Volney is a very excellent summary of duty; and, perhaps, might lead on his theory of man to as great an amount of mere animal pleasure as could be expected in the present constitution of things.\* In opposition to this, however, we contend, that to view human nature in this light, is to strip it of everything that is great or good; to banish every true virtue from the world, as far as it is bound to spring from a virtuous source; and to hasten on a result, which

\* M. Destutt de Tracy, in his “*Traité de la Volonté*,” affirms the theory of Hobbes, that man’s will or desire is his sole law; that justice and injustice exist not in the nature of things; that all morality is based upon human legislation.

would end in the breaking up of every tie that holds human society together.

There are in the human mind universally two great fundamental notions of right and wrong, which are as absolute in their nature, and as impossible of being obliterated, as any fundamental axioms of man's universal belief. The fact, that men of different nations, in different ages, and in different states of mental development, have held the most conflicting notions, as to what belongs to the category of right, and what belongs to that of wrong, is no evidence whatever against the universality of those fundamental notions themselves; nay, it rather proves that they always exist, although the moral judgment may not be enlightened enough to apply them to all the practice of life. These notions, moreover, are accompanied with a moral *emotion*, which, while it gives us a profound admiration for what is purely disinterested, acts as an *imperative*, that becomes more and more powerful, in proportion to the greater development of the moral faculty; ever inciting us to the avoidance of evil, and the constant pursuit of good. The whole phenomena of our disinterested feelings; the admiration and enthusiasm we necessarily feel in the contemplation of any lofty examples of them, an enthusiasm which rises higher just in proportion, not to the *utility*, but to the *sacrifice* which accompanies their exercise; the entire absorption which such instances manifest in the rectitude of the action, to the utter neglect of the suffering which may accrue—all point us to a class of moral sentiments, to which the notion of our physical preservation has not the very slightest resemblance.

The ultimate aim, however, of these lofty and disinterested moral feelings, is fully developed only in our *religious* nature, pointing us, as it does, to a class of duties, altogether beyond the sphere of our present life, and to a destiny extending itself into the immeasurable futurity. The ideological philosophy, in the hands of Volney, was professedly an atheistical one. Instead of attempting to account for the universality of the religious emotions, it derided them; and when it found the arguments by which their validity was sustained to be unanswerable, it deemed it convenient to enstamp all religious actions and feelings as those, which were only fit for dupes, or panders to the profit of a knavish priesthood. To answer such arguments as these, we have neither space nor inclination, as it would be reasoning against a private hostility to religion, rather than a philosophical objection. Whatever system of religion he might



adopt, unquestionably a true philosopher, who would give an account of all the elements of human nature, must not leave out, or dismiss with an incredulous smile, those deep sentiments and impulses of a spiritual kind, which have played so immense a part in the history of the world, which have given to humanity its greatest force in every vast achievement, and lent it, as we think, its greatest glory.

The most purely abstract idea, perhaps, which we can take of man is, that he is a *force* or a *power* sent into the universe to act its part on the stage of being. The sensationalist views him as a mechanical force, created by chance, seeking simply the preservation of its organism, and accomplishing the destiny of a nature, which strange to say, never had an intelligent designer. A more enlarged philosophy views him as an intellectual and a moral force, formed by the Being who is the centre and source of all intelligence, and all goodness, and endowed for the present with an organization adapted to the material world around him. The great aim of his being, in this view of it, is to develop more and more the intellectual and moral energy of which his real and essential nature consists; to defend the body indeed, as the organ of its present manifestation, but as it dies away, to prepare for a higher manifestation of intelligence and virtue, to which his religious aspirations had been ever tending, and where his highest desires will be ultimately fulfilled.

Before we take our leave, however, of the ideological philosophy, we must mention a far more recent effort, which has been made, both to advocate its principles, and to furnish them with additional proofs and illustrations. I refer to the works of Dr. Broussais published about the year 1828, one of which is entitled, "*Traité de Physiologie appliquée à la Pathologie*," and another, "*De l'Irritation et de la Folie, ouvrage, dans lequel les Rapports du Physique et du Moral sont établis sur les Bases de la Médecine Physiologique*." These works are by no means the productions of a philosopher, but rather of a physician, who, having devoted his life entirely to the observation of pathological and physiological phenomena, discovers in them, as he imagines, the theory of all the mental and moral manifestations of which man is the subject.\* In this view his aim

\* Broussais' life was eventful. He was born near St. Malo, 1772, and after a wild-spent youth, studied medicine at Brest. On completing his term of study, he spent some years at sea, as surgeon to various ships of war. In 1799, he went to Paris, where he prosecuted his studies with great ardor, and took his doctor's degree. Soon after he attached himself to the French army, and travelled in company with the troops of Napoleon, through the greater part of Europe. In 1814, he was appointed professor in the military hospital at Paris, where he remained till his death, which took place in the year 1838.

coincides with that of Cabanis, although his ability for carrying it out was not by any means so great; and in addition to this, the style of invective in which he sometimes indulges against the spiritualists, gives to his writings a very unphilosophical aspect. To enter minutely into the various physiological theories he propounds; into his attempts to determine the seat of the different mental or moral powers; into his disquisitions upon irritation and the physical causes of madness, would require the knowledge peculiar to those of his own profession. This is, however, the less necessary, because whatever theory may be advocated to account for such phenomena, upon physical principles, it does not by any means set us at rest upon the higher psychological questions, to which intellectual philosophy gives its chief attention. The following will give a general idea of his theory of mental phenomena.

Sensation, according to the last work above referred to, consists in a circle of irritation or excitation, which traverses the human system from the brain to the extremities of the nerves. Of this irritation, sensibility is the direct result. Perception, again, is an excitation of the cerebral matter; and from this it is affirmed, all the phenomena of intellection may be shown to spring. The emotions originate in like manner,—“elles viennent toujours d’une stimulation de l’appareil nerveux du percevant.” Thus, in fact, we have in Broussais the doctrine of Cabanis modified by a peculiar theory of irritation; a theory on which he laid great stress, as being a most important discovery. In the second edition of his work on the “*Rapports du Physique et du Moral*,” Broussais avowed himself on the side of phrenology, and by combining the methods of reasoning employed respectively by Cabanis and Gall, sought to render his positions impregnable. It must be confessed, however, that in taking this course he was simply attempting to find appliances to maintain a bad cause. We have shown already, in the case of phrenology, that no analysis of our intellectual or active powers, and no valid explanation of our fundamental ideas, can, in the very nature of things, flow from the method of investigation it adopts, inasmuch as our mental phenomena must have been already duly considered, before any relation could be observed between them and the different portions of the brain. In like manner, whatever system, different from phrenology, be employed to account for the facts of consciousness upon physical principles, still there is the same necessity for metaphysical research, before anything can be distinctly known of those mental processes which

we have to explain. With regard to theories of irritations or of vibrations, or of any similar movements by which materialism is supposed to be rendered feasible or intelligible, we have seen, in our general discussion of the materialist question, that such systems at best can be but mere hypotheses; that even as hypotheses they do not account for the central force by which the vital and intellectual organs are continually put into exercise; that they in every case confound the organ itself with the real exciting cause of the various functions; and, lastly, that they totally fail in explaining the unity and simplicity of the mind, as witnessed by the daily evidence of our consciousness.\*

With Broussais we may consider, that the efforts of ideology cease. Many, it is true, may still hold the principles it has supported; but none, that we are aware of, are now to be found, who are able or ready to maintain them on broad metaphysical grounds.†

The most complete and able attempts which France has made during the present century to uphold sensational principles, are, without doubt, to be found in this ideological school, which we have just been reviewing. At the same time, there have been some few other manifestations of a completely different character and complexion, which, as belonging to the sensational philosophy of the nineteenth century, it would be wrong to pass by unnoticed. We must not forget, for instance, that the originator of the phrenological system, Dr. Gall, though a German by birth, published his researches chiefly in the French language; and that, whatever honor may be due to the school at large, at the head of which he stands, it must be mainly attributed to the industry and intelligence with which he pursued the subject in all its different bearings. Gall died in the year 1828, leaving behind him the reputation of being an earnest and sincere searcher after truth; and though decried by many, as being grossly materialistic in his views, yet it is by no means evident that he really intended to advocate materialism, while it is quite certain that he strongly repelled the charges of fatalism and immorality, which were attributed to his opinions.

Another erratic genius who shone with some brilliancy for a time in the hemisphere of French philosophy, appeared in the person of Azaïs. His object was not merely to discuss the phenom-

\* For critiques on Broussais' principles, see Damiron's "*Essai sur l'Histoire de la Phil.*" vol. i. p. 163; and, still better, Tissot's "*Anthropologie*," vol. ii. chap. ii. sec. 2.

† M. Magendie stands on the side of the materialists, and has attempted to explain, on physical principles, the "*Rapports du Physique et du Moral*;" but he is entirely a physiologist, and by no means a philosopher.

ena of mind, but rather to embrace the whole universe in the grasp of his philosophical system. The Lectures he delivered about the year 1809, abounding at once with ease and elegance, gave great popularity to his opinions, which were soon further developed and discussed in three different works, entitled respectively, "Cours de Philosophie Générale," "Précis du Système Universel," and "l'Explication Universel." To give an adequate description of the theories contained in these voluminous works, would be a task by no means brief, and far from easy; but we refer the curious reader to an elaborate article in the "Journal des Débats" of the 5th of November 1824, a translation from which will be found in a Note at the end of this volume.\*

The only name which we have now further to adduce as belonging to the school of French sensationalism, is that of M. Comte, whose brilliant scientific genius has raised him to the very highest rank of modern authors, and given him a reputation not confined to France, but as extensive as the cultivation of philosophy itself. M. Comte was originally an offspring of the school of Saint Simon, and in some respects has ever retained an affinity with the doctrines of that remarkable sect; yet his profound researches in science, and his independence of mind as a thinker, have given him a position far beyond that of a mere partisan to any system of philosophy whatever. Up to the year 1816, he was a teacher in the Polytechnic School at Paris: on relinquishing his more regular duties there, he devoted ten years of his life to the preparation of a course of lectures on *Positive Philosophy*: these he delivered in 1829, before an audience at Paris, comprehending many of the most eminent philosophers of the country, and has since re-elaborated and published.

To enter into the idea of the Positive philosophy, we must attend for a moment to the estimate which M. Comte has made of the present condition of human knowledge, as it appears upon the stage of European civilization. All knowledge which aims at generality, he considers to be at present in an utterly disjointed state. Systems of philosophy there are in abundance, and religions more than enough, but all are for the most part in contradiction with each other, so that in matter of fact, the whole sum of knowledge they pretend to convey, is by one or another of them repudiated and denied. The reason of this confusion may be twofold. Either the mind of man may be searching for truth beyond the legitimate

\* *Vide* Note C in the Appendix.



region of its actual knowledge, or it may not take a sufficiently comprehensive view of that truth, which really *does* lie within its grasp. The Positive philosophy essays to overcome these hindrances to the march of science; it undertakes to dismiss all the absolute ideas, all the *a priori* conceptions, all the theological chimeras which have fettered the human reason hitherto, and by completing the sum of the positive sciences, to rise by a purely experimental pathway at the lofty elevation of a universal philosophy.\*

To establish the justice of these views upon the present state of human knowledge, and confirm our hope in the new organum, M. Comte attempts to grasp the great law of human progress—the principle by which knowledge has developed itself along the pathway of the ages. This law of progress is discovered in the fact, that the human intellect in the case of individual nations, as well as of humanity at large, passes through three distinct stages—the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. In his more infantile and simple state, man reposes implicit faith in the supernatural; all the operations of nature have their appropriate deities, and its secrets can only be unfolded by a Divine communication. The highest form of this conception is *monotheism*, in which we see the transition from the age of theology to that of metaphysics. In the metaphysical age, the mind having elevated itself beyond the reach of superstition, regards the phenomena of the universe not as the interventions of Deity, but as implying the existence of real entities and metaphysical forces. These speculations again terminate in the universal idea of nature, as the unity of those abstract agencies, which are falsely imagined to have a real concrete existence. So far, then, we see the human reason groping for truth in a region beyond the limits in which truth can be scanned.† Amidst these feeble endeavors, however, we note the rise of a scientific method, which, by the certainty of its conclusions and the brilliancy of its discoveries, stands in striking contrast with the systems we have before described. This method is *the positive*—a system of philosophy which, basing itself entirely upon palpable facts, and ignoring everything beyond them, raises itself to the perception of the *laws* of the universe, and strives to include them all under one vast but certain generalization. All the sciences, according to Comte, invariably pass through this triple process. Some of them, such as astronomy, physics, and chemistry, have already arrived at the

\* Cours de Phil. Pos.—See the “*Considérations Générales sur la Nature et l'Importance de la Phil. Positive.*” Vol. i. lec. i; also vol. iv. lecs. 46 and 47.

† Cours de Phil. Pos. vol. i. p. 3—7, and more fully in Lectures 23 to 56.

positive stage ; others of them, such as physiology, or as it is here termed, biology, have only attained their second period of development, while the whole science of humanity (sociology) is yet in its first era—every theory hitherto propounded being hampered with the false idea of a providence and a God.\*

Having thus defined and settled the limits of the human reason, M. Comte next proposes to make our knowledge general and complete, by exhibiting the co-ordination of the sciences, and thus rising by degrees to the summit of the pyramid. The classification given us of the sciences at large, and their regular order of development, is unquestionably a masterpiece of scientific thinking, as simple as it is comprehensive. In studying the nature and relation of *facts* (for such is the whole province of the Positive philosophy), the human mind begins with those which are at once the most simple and the most general—those, namely, of *number* or mathematics. Closely connected with numerical relations, at the first remove above pure arithmetical abstractions, are those which refer to the properties of *space*—the facts with which geometry is conversant ; and next above them *mechanics*, rationally considered. These, then, form together the first or lowest rank in the co-ordination of the sciences.

Having investigated the phenomena of number and space, we are in a condition to enter upon the higher investigation of *matter*, which we find appears in its most simple and least complicated form in the science of astronomy. There it is that we see the great primary laws and movements of the material universe on a gigantic and imposing scale.

Descending from this general view of the properties of matter to the surface of our globe, we next carry our researches into the department of *terrestrial physics*, in which the results are indeed less definite and general than in astronomy, but far more rich and diversified.

The fourth step brings us into the department of chemistry. Here we have to observe the still more obscure and recondite movements of physical agencies, working and interworking with each other, until we are brought up to the point, where the mere dynamical phenomena cease, and the wonders of organization commence.

The fifth place, then, in the rank of the sciences, is Biology, a branch which includes *all* the phenomena of life, from the lowest

\* Vol. i. lec. ii. ‘ Sur la Hierarchie des Sciences Positives.’

vegetable productions up to the highest organic structure as seen in man. Here the complication and diversity of the facts presented become vastly exaggerated, and the science itself rendered proportionally difficult and tardy in its development.

The last and top-stone of this magnificent evidence is Sociology, the science of man, as he has appeared on the stage of history from remote ages to the present time. Here we arrive at the great term of human knowledge; the chasm between the science of mind, and all the rest, is filled up; and thus, by the completion of our positive knowledge, we rise to the attainment of ideas, which, with all the certainty of experimental truth, unite all the generality of metaphysical research. Who can fail to observe and admire the perfect harmony of truth as here exhibited? Commencing with the most abstract region of our knowledge, we see one rank arising above the other, each diminishing in certainty and generality as it increases in richness and complexity, until the whole circuit is completed, the highest region won, and all the sciences linked together by the harmonious order in which they are developed, by the onward march of humanity towards the completion of truth.

Such is the general outline of M. Comte's theory, which we at once perceive to be an enormous system of materialism, grounded upon great research, and supported by all the aids, which physical science, with its latest improvements, can present. All philosophy, according to this system, rests upon the observation of outward *facts*. In physics we observe the facts of the material world, in physiology the phenomena of life, and in social physics the historical facts of man's intellectual being; the great and sole object of philosophy being to classify and arrange these objects so as to discover the laws of their progress, and bring those laws to their highest possible generalization. This, it is affirmed, has been accomplished by exhibiting the co-ordination of the sciences, and by deducing the one great law of man's intellectual development. On this system we remark—

1. Supposing the theory for a moment to be correct, and allowing that, to account for the intellectual phenomena of mankind, we have succeeded in bringing to light the threefold process above explained, still we are far from having reached a firm and satisfactory resting place. Admit that every science goes through its theological, its metaphysical, and its positive era; why, we ask, is this wonderful law of development in operation? Is it by chance

that humanity is so formed? Is it by some primæval fate that things should take such a direction? If there be a law, surely there must be a lawgiver. If there is a majestic plan by which mankind marches on to its destiny, something or other must have caused it. If history be so glorious a drama, some *mind* has certainly planned it, and watched over its execution. To eliminate a law magnificent in its results, and then to deny any intelligent principle from which it proceeded, can only be the part of determined prejudice or egregious trifling with the highest truths. But—

2. This law, so greatly extolled, has in fact only a very partial truth about it. That some of the natural sciences have passed through the three stages described, may be readily admitted, without for a moment supposing that the two former elements are intended to be eventually merged in the latter. Theology and metaphysics form as necessary portions of our intellectual life, as does positive science. Their proper sphere may become more accurately defined as knowledge increases, but never can the one be absorbed in any of the others. The reason of man ever strives, and will strive after some fixed and absolute reality; and his moral nature will ever pant after the divine. While here and there a grovelling spirit will sink itself in the earthly and material, giving itself wholly up to the life of sense, the perpetual tendency of mankind at large (and this is our highest appeal) is to seek a reality beneath the fleeting phenomena around them, and to believe, with unwavering faith, that the world sprung from a Creator, man from a God.

3. Positivism in denying the possibility of a mental philosophy, at the same time supposes a mental theory of its own. The internal facts of consciousness do not come under those sensuous manifestations to which the positive philosopher alone appeals; the only knowledge he pretends to have of the human mind is derived either from the actions of mankind or the construction of the brain. But we would ask—is it the same thing to observe the outward actions of a man, and to consider the mental processes from which they spring? or is it the same thing to note the organs of the cerebral hemispheres, and to classify our powers, faculties, desires and emotions? To maintain this, involves a theory of mind far more untenable, as we have before shown, than that which the positivist denounces as dark and unintelligible; and even this theory itself cannot exist without the aid of those very facts of consciousness, which are so thoughtlessly disowned. Ex-



ternal facts can never reveal to us any law or phenomenon of mind, until reflection has in our own case, made the inward world clear to our understanding, and given us a psychology to start with. The procedure of positivism with regard to psychology, therefore, is to cancel *openly* a whole world of positive facts, and then *tacitly* to admit them in the construction of its own material theory. If we are at liberty to deal with facts in this manner, any theory we choose may be easily maintained.

4. The great opposition of the positive philosophy, however, is aimed mainly against the existence of necessary truth—of absolute ideas. Here, however, we have the same spectacle repeated as in the case above mentioned; we have absolute ideas denied in one breath, and then employed in the next. M. Comte is a great mathematician; and to give a coloring to his theory he speaks of geometrical *phenomena*, as though the fundamental conceptions of mathematical truth were mere sensuous images. Space, number, time, perfect geometrical figures and ideas, all these may, indeed, be phenomena to the human *reason*, but they are phenomena which have nothing to do with the senses. The same may be said of many other conceptions. Take the idea of *law*, an idea on which the positive philosophy is itself grounded; is it not the conception of something fixed, unalterable, necessary? Take away its fixed and absolute character, and it will serve as a fundamental law no longer. Take the idea of *substance*—its denial virtually annihilates the world, and involves us in the very depths of a scepticism, against which the universal reason of mankind eternally protests. Take the idea of *cause*—and here also we find a conception, which, so long as the human *will* exists, breaks down every attempt to reduce all nature and all being to an unconnected series of individual facts. Take, in fine, the idea of *duty*, and it is there alone that we can find a basis for all the moral phenomena of humanity at large. Every system of philosophy, every abstract science, though it should exclaim aloud against the admission of absolute ideas, yet tacitly avails itself of them as the very foundation on which it reposes.

5. Finally, even supposing the positive system could succeed in freeing itself from these charges, and could really accomplish all it professes—what would be gained by it after all—or rather, we might say, what expectations would *not* be lost. Positivism, while it seems to proffer a boon with one hand, yet with the other throws an impenetrable veil over everything which it most concerns us to

know and to feel. What does it tell us of nature? Nothing. It merely points out to us a huge piece of machinery, and attempts to discover the laws of its operation; but it speaks not of its origin—of its significancy—of its destination; it throws no light upon the forms of beauty it exhibits, upon the divine ideas it unfolds, upon the moral influences it conveys to that highest of all terrestrial creations—the human soul. What does it tell us of humanity? Nothing. It explains not why we exist—it tells us not whither we are tending. The problem of moral evil is left a dark and cheerless mystery; while the anticipations of the good are all buried in the sepulchre of a stern and rugged materialism. What does it tell us of freedom, of conscience, of accountability, of immortality? Nothing. Human freedom sinks into the law of a fixed and unchangeable necessity—conscience is never allowed to testify of an eternal justice to which the oppressed may ever appeal, and upon whose decisions the righteous may rely for their ultimate vindication—wisdom and goodness, as possessed by man, cannot look beyond their own present imperfection, to a perfect wisdom, an unsullied purity, to which we are ever tending—nor can hope whisper the thought, that there is a life beyond life, that the intelligence which gazes into the dim futurity, and the aspirations which long for an eternal home, are any other than delusions—at once our glory and our curse. Finally, what does it tell us of God? Again the answer we receive is *nothing*. Formerly it was said, exclaims M. Comte, the heavens declare the glory of God; but *now* they only recount the glory of Newton and Laplace: nay, the conceptions of the atheistic astronomers of France, are declared to be far more perfect than those which the universe itself has been able to realize. “These heavens, this harmonious universe,” says M. Saisset, “which filled the mind of Newton, of Kepler, of Linnaeus, with religious enthusiasm, MM. Comte and Littré consider to be imperfectly constructed; they so far forget themselves, as to say that the universe exhibits a degree of wisdom inferior to that which man possesses, and that it is easy in the detail, as well as in the whole, to conceive one far better. What! has the nature of things been so clumsy, and so little consistent with itself? has it been able to people space with infinite worlds, and make to circulate through all existence the torrents of life; and yet has it not been able to give them laws sufficiently reasonable to secure the approbation of one of its innumerable creatures? What! can it produce the very intelligence of these two philosophers, and yet

not equal it in its plans and combinations? That which MM. Comte and Littré, forsooth, conceive in their study, that which, according to their own theory, germinates in the brain of these two feeble organic machines destined to endure but for a day, is more reasonable, more beautiful, more harmonious, than the system of existence which nature realizes in its eternal evolution athwart the immensity!"

With all the admiration we cannot but have for our author's brilliant scientific genius, we cannot but deplore the illusions which such minds, charmed with a theory, and absorbed in the investigation of the visible alone, gradually practise upon themselves. M. Comte admits that the stability of the solar system is absolutely necessary to the preservation of all animal existence; but instead of seeing any design in this beautiful adaptation of things to an end, he attempts to show that such stability is but the natural result of the mechanical laws, by which the heavenly bodies perform their movements; and this is his substitute for a God! But here just as much is left to account for as before; nay, go back as we may, resolving phenomena after phenomena into their simpler laws, yet there is just as much necessity as ever for us to assume the existence of a great first cause, unless we choose to subvert all the indestructible notions upon which we are obliged to act in all the practical affairs of life. Every action of the body, every effort of the mind, every volition of whatever kind, reveals to our consciousness the notion of a spiritual power, from which the source of our own action proceeds. Starting from this inward revelation, the reason of mankind cannot gaze upon the phenomena of the universe, without assigning a spiritual power of infinite grandeur as the "*primum mobile*" of the whole. As well can we deny *self*, the cause of our own actions, as deny *God*, the cause of the *kosmos*, the universe of order around us. This first step, that of the real existence of a supreme being, the source of law, being extorted, the keystone to a system of mechanical materialism, such as that contained in the "*Course of Positive Philosophy*," is taken away; its massive structure crumbles piecemeal before the force of spiritual truth, and with it the immortal hopes and aspirations of our nature return to smile upon the path of human life.

We only quote, in conclusion, the beautiful language of a reviewer well able to appreciate the merits as well as the errors of the positive philosophy:—"Had the opinions we have been combating been maintained by those rash speculators, who are per-

mitted at distant intervals to disturb the tranquillity of the religious world, we should not have allowed them to interfere with ours. But when a work of profound science, marked with great acuteness of reasoning, and conspicuous for the highest attributes of intellectual power—when such a work records the dread sentiment, that the universe displays no proofs of an all-directing mind, and records it too as the deduction of unbiassed reason, the appalling note falls upon the ear as like the sounds of desolation and death. The life-blood of the affections stands frozen in its strongest and most genial current, and reason and feeling but resume their ascendancy, when they have pictured the consequences of so frightful a delusion. If man is thus an orphan at his birth, and an outcast in his destiny; if knowledge is to be his punishment and not his pride; if all his intellectual achievements are to perish with him in the dust; if the brief tenure of his being is to be renounced amid the wreck of vain desires, of blighted hopes, and of bleeding affections—then in reality, as well as in metaphor, is life a dream.”\*

\* The above remarks apply to the spirit of Comte’s philosophy *as a whole*. No candid mind can refuse to acknowledge the great merit there is in many of his separate researches, both in physical science and in sociology.



## CHAPTER V.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN IDEALISM.

IN tracing the progress of idealism from the revival of modern philosophy to the opening of the present century, we described four different movements which it exhibited respectively in four different parts of Europe. The French movement was seen to develop itself first in the school of Descartes, and to evaporate at length either into the revived Platonism of Malebranche, or the realistic pantheism of Spinoza. The English idealism, polemical in its origin, and living a life of contest rather than one of calm and lofty repose, we saw gradually retiring before the power of its adversary, and ere the eighteenth century was ended, well nigh extinguished under the advancing sensationalism of the successors of Locke. The German idealism, on the contrary, seemed destined to realize nobler fortunes. Sent forth under the auspices of Leibnitz, the greatest scholar and perhaps thinker of his age, it enjoyed, during its infancy, a prosperous career in connection with the logical order of the Wolfian school; then, taking another direction, it poured astonishment over Europe, through the works of the immortal Kant; and at the close of the century only seemed preparing for a still grander development, and a still bolder flight. Lastly, the philosophy of Scotland, although perhaps most vigorous and most original when in the hands of Reid, its real founder, yet appeared at the close of the last century to promise for the present a development of its resources, in some measure corresponding to the victory it had already achieved over the pretensions of scepticism.

The two anti-sensational forces, therefore, which meet our view on stepping over the threshold of the nineteenth century, are the respective philosophies of Scotland and Germany. Upon these it devolved to carry on the combat against the materialism of England and France; and from these were derived the fruitful germs

of thought, which have now succeeded in producing a reaction in favor of idealism in both those countries. In pursuing, then, the history of the idealistic tendency through our own age, we must first look to Scotland and Germany, as the sources of its chief movements; having done this, we shall be the better able to estimate their effect upon our own country, and their share in the rise of the modern eclecticism of France. This sketch, as far as Scotland, Germany, and England are concerned, we shall assign to the present chapter; the history of modern eclecticism, although strictly anti-sensational, yet, as presenting several peculiarities, we must reserve for a separate consideration.

### SECT. I.—*The Scottish School of the Nineteenth Century.*

The rise and progress of the Scottish metaphysics during the *last* century have been already noticed in a former chapter. Up to the time of Reid, as we then saw, the representationalist theory of perception, though not in its strictly Aristotelian form, was the general belief of the philosophical world; and upon its foundation the edifice of scepticism, as erected by Berkeley and Hume, mainly rested. Against this system the philosophy of Reid was the natural reaction; and as the effect of all scepticism is to send us back again to first principles, so it was only a thing to be reasonably expected, that the bold and sweeping scepticism of Hume should give rise to a proportionally deep and thorough revision of the fundamental principles of human knowledge. The key to all that Dr. Reid ever wrote upon these topics may be found in the one consideration, that he stood forth as the professed opponent of philosophical scepticism, and had from the first determined to devote his whole life, to tear up the very deepest roots from which it sprung. Hence arose his attack upon the doctrine of ideas, as being the *πρωτον ψευδος* of his adversaries; hence his opposition to the empirical tendency of Locke's refutation of innate ideas; hence his assertion of the immediacy of our knowledge of the external world; hence, in a word, his principle of common sense, by means of which he sought to enlist the universal consent of man's intelligence against the subtle, and sweeping conclusions of a false philosophy. The very position in which Reid was placed, threw him back upon the only true method of all metaphysical investigation, that of reflection and inward analysis. Once taught rightly

to interpret the observed facts of our consciousness, he found it no insuperable task to overturn the false hypotheses which had up to that time held an undisputed place in most metaphysical systems.

The polemical character, however, of Reid's philosophy, necessarily gave it a peculiarity unfavorable to its systematic development. Occupied as he was in pulling down, he had but little time to build up; and even that which he did succeed in erecting had rather the character of an outpost strongly placed to defend the citadel of truth, than of fresh turrets tending to beautify or enlarge it. Moreover, the opposition he was called upon to sustain against the almost universal voice of authority, both in ancient and modern philosophies, naturally led him to underrate a correct knowledge of their nature and history, and to deprive himself of many of the aids which a more extensive study of the best metaphysical writings would have afforded.\* All this tended to give an air of incompleteness to his system; so much so indeed, that he appeared before the world not exactly as a philosopher, but rather in the character of an earnest mind, contending only for a few great principles of truth, and willing, when those main positions were gained, to rest content with the first great victory, and leave to his successors the task of following it up into all its legitimate consequences. The more immediate successors of Reid, however, failed to do this. Furnished with their new philosophical organon, that of common sense, they did little more than celebrate a kind of perpetual ovation over the conquest which their great predecessor had by its means achieved; or, if they ever attempted themselves to wield it against other enemies, they did so with far less nerve and proportionally small success.

Amongst the successors of Reid, however, there was one disciple, inspired with profound veneration for his master, and deeply imbued with his spirit, who rose to a distinction far above the rest, and succeeded in giving to his country's philosophy a popularity, which, in the want of some such advocate, it would, in all probability, never have obtained. The reader will at once perceive that I refer to Dugald Stewart, of whose writings we must now take a brief review.

This celebrated author, whose works form so large an item in the philosophical history of Scotland during the present century, was born in the year 1753. In 1773, he became professor of

\* Not that Reid was altogether insensible to the value of the *History of Philosophy*. Indeed, he reckons it as one among the proper means of knowing the operations of the human mind. "Intellectual Powers," chap. v.

mathematics in the University of Edinburgh, and in 1785, was raised to the chair of moral philosophy. His first work, entitled, "Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind," was published in 1792, and obtained considerable celebrity as a clear and eloquent exposition of the philosophy of Dr. Reid. It was translated into French by M. Prévost of Geneva, and extensively read on the Continent as well as in our own country. In the next year he published his "Outlines of Moral Philosophy," which comprehended the chief results of the Scottish school on the moral phenomena of the human mind, and which have been more recently translated by M. Jouffroy, with an invaluable preface as introduction. In the year 1810, appeared his "Philosophical Essays," in which many of the points at issue between the philosophy of Locke, and that of Reid, are very clearly portrayed, and a lengthened disquisition added on the philosophy of taste. This work was introduced to the French public by M. Huron. In the year 1814, appeared the second volume of the "Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind," comprehending his analysis of the intellectual powers, and a very full exposition of the fundamental laws of human belief, an expression which he substituted for Reid's "Principles of Common Sense." The next two years were occupied in writing his "Preliminary Dissertation on the Progress of Metaphysical, Ethical, and Political Philosophy," the first part of which was published in the Supplement to the "Encyclopædia Britannica," in the year 1816, the second part in the year 1821. So clear, so elegant, and in many respects, so learned is the exhibition there given of the gradual development of metaphysical philosophy in Europe, and so acute the strictures on the different systems which it details, that many ground his chief claim to a lasting reputation upon these rather than upon any of his more systematical writings. The third volume of the "Elements" was published in the year 1827, and in 1828, the year of his death, came out his last work, entitled, "Philosophy of the Active, and Moral Powers of Man."\*

Respecting Stewart's ability as a writer, there never has been, as far as we know, but one opinion, and that decidedly favorable. His reading upon all metaphysical subjects, (with the exception of the more modern German philosophy,) appeared to be almost as extensive as the literature itself; his judgment upon the merits of the different authors was, for the most part, clear and comprehen-

\* The second volume of the "Elements" was translated into French by M. Farcy; the preliminary discourse, by M. Buchon; and the "Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers," by MM. Simon and Huron.



sive ; his own mind exhibited all the traces of the scholar and the man of taste, while his easy and attractive style seemed to throw a charm, and an interest around the most abstruse and forbidding subjects. There can be little doubt but that the Scottish metaphysics, while they derived their bone and sinew from Dr. Reid, yet owed to the labors of his successor all that mould and symmetry, that order and beauty, which have given them a popularity greater than any philosophical treatises in the English language, which have appeared in modern times.

To give a criticism on Stewart's philosophy, as a whole, would be, in fact, nothing more than to repeat what we have already said of his predecessor and instructor, Dr. Reid ; the points in which he has departed from Reid's opinions being comparatively very few, and those few but of slight importance. It may be useful, however, to mention one or two particulars, in which Stewart may be said to have rendered essential service to the philosophy of Scotland, and to have excelled all those who preceded him in the same department.

1. He introduced many great improvements into the metaphysical *phraseology* of his school. The most prominent instance of this is seen in the fact of his discarding the term "principles of common sense," (the very term by which Reid and his immediate successors have chiefly characterized their system,) and conveying the same idea under the more dignified expression, "Fundamental Laws of Human Belief." The term, "principles of common sense," was in many respects objectionable : it appeared to place common sense in direct opposition to philosophy, and by implication, to assert that the two were altogether irreconcilable. Stewart perceived the disadvantage which arose from this circumstance, and proceeded with a laudable zeal to remove it.

To accomplish this end, he analyzed more closely than had been done before, the notions which Reid intended to convey under the expression itself, and showed that, properly speaking, they refer to the *primary elements of our reason*, rather than, (as Reid implied,) to the principles upon which *reasoning* is conducted. Common sense, we know, in the popular use of the term, is opposed to an incorrect and an untenable method of inference, to the habit of drawing false conclusions, or of admitting premises on slight evidence. On the other hand, the primary elements of man's reason are altogether of a different nature ; their absence would imply absolute insanity ; so that, instead of terming them principles of

common sense, they should rather be designated *fundamental laws of human belief*, without which it were impossible for the mind to perform one of the intellectual operations, for which it is destined. "The former expression," Stewart remarks, "would only imply that we were apt to fall into absurdities and improprieties in the common concerns of life; but to denominate such laws of belief as we have been considering, '*constituent elements of human reason*,' while it seems quite unexceptionable in point of technical distinctness, cannot justly be censured as the slightest deviation from our habitual forms of speech." We give this as a specimen (perhaps the most striking one which could be brought forward) of the care which our author bestowed on his philosophical phraseology. He well knew that nothing tended so much to raise metaphysical speculations above objections and misunderstanding, nothing to commend it so much to the common intellect of man, nothing so much to place it on a firm and lasting basis, as to clothe it in distinct, appropriate, and intelligible language.\*

2. Another service which Stewart rendered, was to revise the *classification*, which Reid had left behind him, of the phenomena of the human mind. The fundamental principle of classification is the same in each, that, namely, which divides all mental phenomena into *intellectual* and *active* powers. Under each of these two heads Reid drew out a long list of faculties or feelings, which he too hastily set down as original and peculiar facts of our mental constitution, apparently with little attempt to resolve them into any more primary elements. The instinctive principles especially were very imperfectly classified in Reid's philosophy, since they were made so numerous and complicated, that the effect was rather to perplex, than to throw any additional light upon the subject. Stewart, though far from giving a classification which can be considered unobjectionable, yet thoroughly revised that of his predecessor; applied to many parts of it a closer and better analysis; and if he did not accomplish all that could be wished on this head, yet pointed out the way to those who soon after succeeded him. No doubt the excessive simplification of the sensationalist school was the ground of Reid's jealousy against resolving the phenomena of mind into a very small number of original elements: neither, with the absurd conclusions of the French materialists before his eyes, was Stewart very likely to venture with much boldness upon any spec-

\* On this point, see his observations, "on the vagueness and ambiguity of the common philosophical language, relative to the reason," &c.—*Elements*, Part. 2, preliminary remarks.

ulations of the same nature. Notwithstanding this, however, he furnished many instances of elegant analysis, which not only introduced decided improvements into Reid's classification, but prepared the way for others to proceed still further on the same road.

3. But one of the greatest services which Stewart rendered to the philosophy of his country, is due to the manner in which he illustrated, confirmed, and adorned it by his *learning*. Reid seemed as if he gloried in standing directly opposed to the authority of more than two thousand years. Stewart, on the contrary, rather sought to prove, that the philosophy of other ages and other nations often tended to support his own. The former had to fight the battle for first principles so sternly, that he hardly thought of proceeding further when the victory was once achieved; the latter came forward when the contest was already over, and had abundant leisure to confirm the main conclusions they had deduced by an appeal to extraneous sources.

Than Stewart, few men, perhaps, were ever better enabled to carry on this kind of research. Devoted exclusively to philosophical studies, holding a position which gave abundant leisure from professional duties, situated in a literary capital where books to any extent were at his command, he enjoyed every facility which was needed to aid him in mastering the history of philosophy and in applying it to the enlargement and perfection of his own system. Learning always inspires confidence; we naturally place reliance upon those, who build upon the well-known experience of past ages; and this was, doubtless, one of the methods by which Stewart gained the confidence of so many of his contemporaries upon most of the questions which involve metaphysical analysis. He appeared evidently writing upon topics which he had thoroughly mastered, respecting which he knew the well-nigh universal voice of history; and this alone was sufficient to give him a power to influence the opinions, and to gain the suffrages of mankind, which a more original and a less learned philosopher would probably have wanted.

Whilst, however, we can easily find so much to commend in the writings we have been thus briefly reviewing, there are points of no little consequence, to which we might make equally decisive objections. There are certain theories, for example, involved in his classification of the powers of the human mind, which, if strictly followed out, would have gone far to despoil his philosophy of its peculiar excellence. The classification itself is as follows:—

1. Consciousness ; 2. Perception ; 3. Attention ; 4. Conception ; 5. Abstraction ; 6. Association of Ideas ; 7. Memory ; 8. Imagination ; 9. Judgment or Reasoning.

Now, first of all, to make *consciousness* a separate faculty perfectly collateral with the others, involves a principle, which would soon have re-opened the floodgates of scepticism, and contravened the very conclusions which both Reid and himself with so much labor had established. Consciousness, as viewed by Stewart, is defined to be "*the faculty by which we are cognizant of our other mental operations.*"\* If this limitation of the term be correct, then, of course, we can never appeal to consciousness for the truth of any objective reality. All for which we can make a direct appeal to consciousness is for the *process of knowing*, never for the thing known. Now, the great and fundamental principle of the school of Reid is, that we perceive external things *immediately*, that we need no image, or idea, or modification of mind as the medium ; but that the common belief of mankind (namely, that we really see, feel, &c., external things themselves) is literally correct.† Once admit that, after I have perceived an object, I need another power termed consciousness, by which I become cognizant of the perception, and by the medium of which the knowledge involved in perception is made valid to the thinking self, and the plea of "*common sense*" against scepticism is cut off. On this principle we are only conscious, after all, of a subjective state ; the objective reality, which we suppose it to involve, may still be a delusion, and we are just as far from controverting the pretensions of the sceptic as ever.

*Perception, as we have before shown, involves a relation between my subjective self and an objective reality* : it is the percipient mind brought into direct contact with the qualities of matter through the medium of its own organism ; take away either of the terms, and the perception is no more ; so that, to be conscious of a perception evidently involves a direct consciousness of the object as well as the subject. If this be true, it follows at once that consciousness cannot be a fact of mind resting on the same footing and col-

\* In the "Outlines of Moral Philosophy," (p. 18,) Stewart gives another and similar definition. "This word denotes the immediate knowledge which the mind has of its sensations, and thoughts, and in general of all its present operations."

† This is Reid's *professed* doctrine. It must be confessed, however, that he has compromised it by making the primary qualities of matter to be *suggested* on occasion of our experience of a sensation by certain unknown causes. If we have no *immediate* intuition of the primary attributes of matter, we are still within the sphere of our subjectivity, still virtually Idealists. *Vid.* Reid's "Inquiry," sec. vii with Sir W. Hamilton's remarks upon it.



lateral with perception; that is to say, it cannot be co-ordinate generally with the other intellectual faculties. Were this the case we should have in each instance two faculties to perform the same office—a redundancy which would be sufficient to condemn any classification that could for a moment admit it. Consciousness, then, ought on Reid's principles to have been explained, not as a separate faculty, but as a more universal term, implying the general condition of reflective intelligence. I am conscious of self, and I am conscious of not self; my knowledge of both in the act of perception is equally direct and immediate; on the other hand, to make consciousness a peculiar faculty, by which we are simply cognizant of our own mental operations, is virtually to deny the immediacy of our knowledge of the external world, and to restore the representationalist's hypothesis in a more subtle form. Hence we maintain, that had Reid or Stewart carried out their doctrine of consciousness to its full results, they would have completely subverted their original conclusions, and lost the victory which they seemed to have won.\*

The second of Stewart's original faculties is *perception*. On this point it is needless to make any further remarks. We have already shown in the case of Reid, that the philosophy of perception was well commenced, but not fully completed. Stewart did nothing to improve the analysis, but simply conveyed the results of Reid's thinking in more elegant and popular language.† Scotland owes it to the present professor of logic in its first university, that the philosophy of common sense has in this respect been made free from the objections which have hitherto attached to it, and the whole question fixed upon a basis, which neither the sceptic nor the idealist will be able very readily to subvert.

The third of the above-mentioned list of faculties is *attention*. "It seems to be a principle," remarks Stewart, "sufficiently ascertained by common experience, that there is a certain act or exer-

\* It would be a convenient distinction if the term *self-consciousness* were always employed whenever we wish to express the mind's cognizance of its own operations. This would help to remove the false notion that we can appeal to consciousness for nothing beyond them. I am aware that we must admit a difference in the *directness* of the evidence which we derive from self-consciousness for the existence of our own mental phenomena, and that of consciousness at large, as voucher for the truth of our primary beliefs. To deny the facts of self-consciousness, such as thoughts, notions, &c., would be a contradiction in terms; the very denial of them involves their existence, because to *doubt* is to *think*. To deny the deliverances of consciousness, however, on the validity of our primary beliefs, would not be an absolute contradiction, but would merely involve the assertion that our very constitution deceives us, and that the most intimate and peculiar utterances of our nature are false and delusive.

† See Stewart's timid account of the whole question in his "Elements." Part i. chap. i. sec. 3.

tion of the mind necessary to fix in the memory the thoughts and perceptions of which we are conscious. This act is one of the simplest of all our intellectual operations; and yet it has been very little noticed by writers on pneumatology."\* Here we see the evil effects of that false classification of our faculties into those of the understanding and those of the will. Had it been seen by Stewart, that *will, activity, power of causation*, expressed the most intimate nature of the soul itself, he would not have required to make a separate faculty for the particular exertion of the will, as applied to our sensations or mental conceptions.

The next three faculties, namely, conception, abstraction, and association, may be likewise reduced to more primitive elements, as indeed has been done by several of the more modern writers of the Scottish school. The two former resolve themselves into other primitive *powers*; the last indicates an ultimate *law* of mind, that regulates the flow of all our ideas and feelings, rather than a separate intellectual power, by which we gain any distinct and peculiar species of knowledge.

All these errors of classification, however, in Stewart's philosophy, are in fact the result of a still more fundamental imperfection, by which it is encumbered. Reid, as we have before observed, evinced some *tendency* to reduce philosophy to an ordinary branch of inductive science; but was too deeply imbued with right views on the nature and necessity of *reflection*, to carry this tendency to any excess. Not so with Stewart. Throughout his whole writings, *the inductive method* seems to be his great idol. Nothing will do but facts, phenomena, observation—Baconian induction; all to be used, moreover, with a due share of discretion not to trespass a foot beyond the beaten road which has been thus pointed out to us. All this, no doubt, has a plausible aspect about it; but it should be remembered, that the method of *reflection*, by which alone our inward life can be scientifically known, is a very different process from that of outward observation, as applicable to the world of nature. When we gaze upon nature, all we can see is simply the succession of events; of the powers which are in operation, we can know nothing *directly*. On the other hand, when we observe the operations of our own minds, we have not only the perception of successive phenomena, but a most intimate consciousness of the power itself by which those phenomena are regulated, and thus ascend from the actual to the necessary—from what *is*,

\* Outlines of Mor. Phil. p. 36.

to what must be. In this way we penetrate a step further into the nature of things, than mere observation could carry us; and by the personal consciousness of our own volitions as causes, we gain a faint conception (which, however, may be strengthened by reflection to almost any amount) of the wondrous operations exerted in upholding and carrying on the universe of existence around us. On this point, however, we shall not enlarge, as it will soon come more fully before our notice in giving a general estimate of the Scottish philosophy.

On the whole, we consider that the philosophy of Stewart, even to a greater extent than that of Reid, was too primary. He was so much employed in defending the outposts which had been won, in strengthening them against any fresh attacks, and in ornamenting them by his learning and taste, that comparatively little progress was made in building up a complete system. He was rather the acute and elegant critic, than the profound and systematic philosopher; and his labors, perhaps, are more highly to be estimated by the ardor and enthusiasm with which they were calculated to inspire others in the pursuit of intellectual science, than by the actual results which they themselves succeeded in educing. The sentiments expressed by Thomas Carlyle, nearly twenty years ago, in the "Edinburgh Review," we regard as one of the most accurate judgments which have been passed upon Stewart as a philosopher. "The name of Dugald Stewart is a name venerable to all Europe, and to none more dear and venerable than to ourselves. Nevertheless his writings are not a philosophy, but a making ready for one. He does not enter on the field to till it, he only encompasses it with fences, invites cultivators, and drives away intruders; often (fallen on evil days) he is reduced to long arguments with the passers-by to prove that it is a field, that this so highly prized domain of his is, in truth, soil and substance, not clouds and shadow. We regard his discussions on the nature of philosophic language, and his unwearied efforts to set forth and guard against its fallacies, as worthy of all acknowledgment, as, indeed, forming the greatest, perhaps the only true improvement which philosophy has received among us in our age. It is only to a superficial observer, that the import of these discussions can seem trivial: rightly understood, they give a sufficient and final answer to Hartley's and Darwin's and all other possible forms of materialism, the grand idolatry, as we may rightly call it, by which,

in all times, the true worship, that of the Invisible, has been polluted and withstood."

The tendency of the Scottish philosophy, up to the point where we have now arrived, was clearly and decidedly anti-sensational. The main efforts both of Reid and Stewart, were directed to the establishment of certain fundamental truths, (whether termed principles of common sense or primary laws of belief,) which could not be subjected on the ground of their empirical origin to the bold attacks of the sceptic. There can be no doubt but that both those writers, with so many evil examples of over-simplification before their eyes, were restrained from carrying out their analysis to the extent they would otherwise have done, and that they were thus led to assign a far greater number of original powers or instincts than were necessary to account for all the phenomena of the case. At the same time the error was on the safe side, especially in an age when everything in the form of philosophy, both in England and France, was rapidly assuming a materialistic and empirical character. The tone of Scottish philosophy, however, was now destined to undergo a very considerable change. Already in the writings of Stewart there were manifested, as we have before remarked, some attempts at a bolder analysis; and these attempts were not likely to be lost upon the ardent minds which succeeded him—minds in some instances deeply imbued with the empirical spirit of the age.

From the close of Stewart's career, indeed, downwards to the present time, we may consider that the *tendency* of the Scottish metaphysical school has been somewhat in the opposite direction from that which it manifested under its earlier supporters.\* Not, indeed, that it has ever run into those more extreme conclusions of sensationalism, which we have noted in the writings of Mill; but still, in its zeal for completing the analysis of the human consciousness, and correcting the errors or imperfections with which the works we have already noticed are characterized, it has incurred some danger, lest, once on the descent towards simplification, it should not know where to stop, in order to avoid the evils of the opposite extreme. We must now proceed to exemplify this, by sketching the history of philosophy in Scotland from the decline of Stewart to the present day.

Amongst the youthful minds which the Edinburgh professor in-

\* To this remark there are some eminent exceptions; none more so than Sir W. Hamilton.



spired with a love for philosophical research, there was *one*, who at an unusually early age showed the marks of an extraordinary genius, and who afterwards rose to an eminence which did not disappoint the expectations he had excited. Dr. Thomas Brown, to whom we allude, was born in the year 1778, and having received a liberal education in England, entered, while yet very young, upon the studies of the University of Edinburgh. At the age of sixteen he commenced the study of moral philosophy, under the tuition of Dugald Stewart; and was even then distinguished for the acuteness with which he entered into the most abstruse questions of metaphysics that were brought before the class. Before he attained his nineteenth year, he undertook to examine and refute the sophistry of Darwin, in his "Zoonomia," and with such clearness did he unravel the web, and expose the fallacies it contained, that the work (published anonymously) was universally attributed by the "Reviews" to some philosopher of high standing and matured ability. His next work, published in 1804, was "On Cause and Effect," a subject which he was led to undertake from some illiberal remarks made upon Mr. Leslie, on account of his favoring the theory of Hume. In 1810, he was elected professor of moral philosophy, in conjunction with Mr. Stewart; and it is upon the lectures which in that capacity he delivered, although published posthumously, without having received their last touches from his own hand, that his fame as a metaphysician has chiefly rested. He died April 2, 1820, beloved by many, regretted by all, in the very ascendancy of his genius and reputation.

As a writer, Brown must be regarded as eminently successful. Inferior to Stewart in classic chasteness of diction, and philosophic elegance of style, yet his mind was of that poetic order which can throw a luxuriance, perhaps we might say a redundancy of imagery and illustration, around every subject that it undertakes. From this, mainly, has arisen the great popularity of his lectures, which have not only passed through many editions, but are now, after more than twenty years, in almost as great request as they were at first. Our chief object, however, at present, is to consider Brown as a *philosopher*, which we shall attempt to do without being drawn away, either by the depreciation of his opponents, or the excessive commendation of his admirers.

That Brown possessed splendid abilities, and that his writings generally are marked with superior excellence, every candid reader must admit. The most distinctive feature of his mind is generally

allowed to have been *the power of analysis*, in which he greatly transcended all philosophers of the Scottish school who preceded him. On this point we can go far to concur in the words of his admiring biographer, where he says, "No intricacy was too involved for him to unravel; no labyrinth too mazy for him to explore. The knot that thousands had left in despair, as too complicated for mortal hand to undo, and which others, more presumptuous, had cut in twain, in the rage of baffled ingenuity, he unloosed with unrivalled dexterity. The enigmas which a false philosophy had so long propounded, and which, because they were not solved, had made victims of many of the finest and highest gifted of our race, he at last succeeded in unriddling."

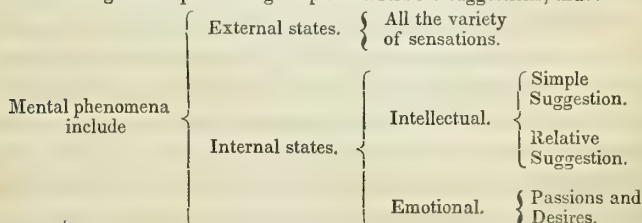
Endued by nature with so acute an analytic faculty, and not being restrained from its exercise by so strong motives as had operated in the case of the earlier metaphysicians of Scotland, it is not surprising, that he became convinced, even while his powers were yet immature, of the necessity there was for a complete revision of the current philosophy of his country, with regard to the classification of mental phenomena. Educated under the influence of Reid's anti-sensational principles, on the one hand, and drawn, both by his own peculiar genius as well as the tendency of the age, to a more refined analysis on the other, he stood in a position admirably adapted to bring the classification of mental phenomena to a high degree of perfection. His reverence for the school to which by birth and education he belonged, secured him against the extravagancies of the French ideologists, and yet he was impelled onwards, by the other circumstances we have mentioned, to commence a kind of secret revolt against his preceptors, in behalf of a more comprehensively analytic system. While, therefore, with the example of his countrymen before him, he could not but be impressed with the absolute necessity of admitting certain fundamental principles of belief; yet he was so charmed, on the other hand, with the many successful attempts of the school of Hartley, to resolve complex phenomena into simpler elements by means of the laws of association, that his whole philosophy became tinged by its influence. To these circumstances we may trace almost all the peculiarities which are to be found in his writings, only considering that his views are worked up with singular clearness and sagacity into a complete system of psychology.

We are far, therefore, from attributing to Brown all the *originality* which has been claimed for him by some of his warmest

admirers. Taking the influence of the Scottish school into consideration, he could hardly fail to retain his hold on some few original principles of man's belief, lest he should again open a door for the re-introduction of the sweeping scepticism of Hume. Taking into account, on the other hand, his native power of analysis, aided and abetted by the current philosophy both of France and England, he was almost necessarily led to adopt some of the conclusions of the *sensational* school; yet still in such a form, that they should not contradict and overturn the main points, which had been gained by the polemical ardor of his own countrymen. He knew how to adopt Hartley's excellencies without his errors; at the same time he clearly saw how far it was possible to depart from Stewart without proclaiming against him too open hostility; and thus from a mind so nicely balanced between the two extremes, there emanated a classification which, avoiding the evils of both sides, came upon the whole nearer to perfection than any British philosopher had succeeded in bringing it before him. In thus extolling Brown's classification of the phenomena of the human mind, we would by no means represent it as unobjectionable, either in principle or in phraseology; all that we intend to convey is, that he was so far successful in his attempt as virtually to arrive at the three great divisions of our mental states, to which all the best analyses of more modern times have manifestly tended, namely, Sensation, Intellection, and Emotion.\*

But whilst we thus award to Brown the merit of great sagacity, and an admirable power of analysis, we must not lose sight of the defects by which his works are characterized, some of the most grave and serious description.

\* It is hardly necessary to state that Brown divides mental phenomena into external and internal states, the latter comprehending intellectual states and emotions, the intellectual states again comprehending simple and relative suggestions, thus:—



Sensation, intellection, and emotion, which the above classification evidently includes, may, without much difficulty, be shown to run parallel with the modern French divisions into sensitivity, intellection, and will. We shall have to show, however, that Brown's view of the will vitiated all the benefit which might have flowed from his division, had he assigned it its due place among the faculties.

1. We would point out his peculiar *phraseology* as by no means calculated to add perspicuity or strength to his philosophy. There is something objectionable in the terms by which his very classification is expressed, namely, *external and internal states*. An external state, taken strictly, is an absurdity; for sensation is as much in the mind as is memory, and judgment, or any of the emotions.\* We are willing to admit, however, that Brown only intended to convey by the phrase "external and internal states," those which are marked in the one case by an outward, and in the other by an inward condition; still there arise two objections against such a classification—first, that in a proper classification, our mental phenomena ought to be designated by something that is characteristic of *themselves*, and not merely of the circumstances which may precede them; and, secondly, that the arrangement, even allowing its principle to be admissible, still fails of accuracy in the case of the emotions, many of which, though they are all denominated internal states, clearly involve certain external conditions; such as those, for example, which are termed instinctive.

Again, we have never been able to see the propriety or the desirableness of using the terms *simple and relative suggestion*, instead of the much more intelligible terms, which others have always employed to express virtually the same phenomena. The whole attempt, in fact, to account for the powers of memory and judgment by the laws of suggestion, we cannot but regard as utterly useless. Admit that memory and suggestion are fundamentally the same thing, what is gained in point of analysis by blotting out one original faculty and substituting for it another? It simply comes, after all, to a question of phraseology. Here is a fact of mind that all admit; hitherto it has been called memory; now, says Brown, we must call it simple suggestion. What benefit, we ask, is conferred upon philosophy by the change? Perhaps it may be replied, that by pointing out the two kinds of suggestion, namely, simple and relative, you reduce the phenomena of memory and judgment to one law. Not at all. Judgment can never be reduced to the general law of suggestion; the very element which separates it from this general law has to be superadded, even by Brown himself, by prefixing the term *relative*; so that, although

\* I am aware that the doctrine of Sir W. Hamilton might be regarded as opposed to this assertion, namely, "that the subject of sensation may be indifferently said to be our organism (as animated,) or our soul (as united with an organism);" but this doctrine of *natural realism* cannot be pleaded on behalf of Brown's consistency, who distinctly considers sensation as a *mental state* only. An *external mental state*, we cannot but regard as a paradox.



we cast away the old-standing terms, yet we are obliged to admit the same things under two other names. Simple suggestion is nothing else than an awkward name for memory, and relative suggestion nothing else than a still more awkward one for judgment; neither is the real nature of the one process or the other made at all clearer by changing the ordinary into the new and less intelligible phraseology.

Still, further, we should contend strongly against giving up the use of the words power, faculty, and other similar expressions, which keep constantly before our view the native activity or spontaneity of the human mind, and substituting in their place the phraseology, which represents all mental phenomena as *states* produced by fixed laws or by other and extraneous causes. That there is something at first sight plausible and apparently simple in this view of our mental phenomena, may be readily granted; but nothing can be really more false and deceptive. It makes our consciousness to resemble a *chain* consisting of *separate* links, the one springing by fixed laws out of the other. Instead of this, it rather resembles a continuous *thread*, without any division into parts, throughout the whole of which the intellect, the feelings, and the will, are indissolubly woven together. The notion of transition-states is purely imaginary. There is no such transition in the soul; there are no points in our being in which we can say, "Now I exist in one state of consciousness, and now I pass over into another." Consciousness is a unity; the elements of which it is composed run through the whole of its being; every instant is a state, and every instant is also a change—equally one and the other. To consciousness, being and progressing are the same thing; and instead of regarding the mind, therefore, as a succession of phases, we are much nearer the truth when we regard it as a living unity, endowed with certain *powers*, which it puts forth for the most part simultaneously, but with variations, with regard to their relative predominance and intensity.\*

Either style of expression, no doubt, *might* be defined, so as to convey a correct notion, whichever notion may be correct; but to us it seems, on the grounds above stated, that the phrases intellectual and active *powers*, give, according to the common use of language, a far more truthful representation of the real character of the facts themselves, than does the philosophical vocabulary for which they have been exchanged. The tendency of

\* See some remarks on this subject by the author, in the Eclectic Review, Dec. 1846.

this exchange is most evidently of a sensational character ; it diminishes the intensity of our notion of self, as an independent source of power, and contemplates the mind rather as a passive existence, moulded into its different states either by the force of circumstances on the one hand, or by its own inevitable and unalterable laws on the other. Unless far better reasons are given for so important a change of language, than any that are to be found in Brown's own writings, we must regard it as a serious defect, and calculated rather to retard than advance the progress of intellectual science.

2. Another defect in the works now before us, arises from the historical inaccuracies and misconceptions with which they abound. Brown possessed an ardent mind, rapid in its operations, vivid in its conceptions, and far more adapted to grasp the whole extent of a theory by one intellectual effort, supplying whatever was obscure by his own ready invention, than to develop it to himself by long and patient research. He was accustomed to read books with astonishing rapidity, and his retentive memory easily preserved the most important ideas for his future use. But it is evident, that this method of acquiring knowledge, however appropriate in the case of ordinary works, was by no means calculated to give deep and comprehensive views of those philosophical systems, which can only be mastered by close and prolonged reflection. Accordingly, we soon discover, that Brown's knowledge of the philosophy of the ancient world was rather popular than profound. He could describe in his own easy and lively style, some of the prominent features of the academy or the porch, of Epicurus or the Stagirite, but he had not studied these various systems in their deeper conceptions, their finer shades, or their historical development. The method in which the controversy regarding the ideal system is treated in his lectures, is a striking instance of the deficiency we are now describing. He accounts for the errors, which arose on this subject among the ancient philosophers, from their supposed indefinite use of the word *idea*, applying it, as he affirms they were accustomed to do, sometimes to the mental affection, sometimes to the organic affection, and sometimes to both. A theory more gratuitous and more inconsistent with facts, could hardly have been proposed. It is evident that our imaginative author, having got a general notion of the peripatetic doctrine of images, species, and phantasms ; having taken for granted that it was held universally, and in the same

manner by the schoolmen ; having supposed, further, that the word *idea* was the one employed in both cases to explain their opinions, hastily jumped at the conclusion, that all the errors involved must have arisen from misconceptions connected with that one word. Now let us learn, from the pen of one who has not inappropriately been termed "the greatest critic of our age," what was the real state of the case. "In the first place," says Sir William Hamilton, "the term *idea* was never employed in any system previous to the age of Descartes to denote little images derived from objects without. In the *second*, it was *never* used in any philosophy, prior to the same period, to signify the immediate object of perception. In the third, it was not applied by the peripatetics or schoolmen to express an object of human thought at all. In the fourth, ideas (taking this term for species) were not in all the dark ages of the scholastic followers of Aristotle regarded as little images derived from without, for a numerous party of the most illustrious schoolmen rejected species not only in the intellect, but in the sense. In the fifth, phantasm, in the old philosophy, was not the external cause of perception, but the internal object of imagination. In the sixth, the term shadowy film, which here and elsewhere he constantly uses, shows that Dr. Brown confounds the matterless species of the peripatetics with the substantial effluxions of Democritus and Epicurus."\* The instance we have here of historical inaccuracy and misconception, is by no means a solitary one in Dr. Brown's writings ; indeed, if we compare the knowledge he manifested generally of the philosophers of antiquity with that possessed by Cudworth, Berkeley, or Henry More, with Cousin in France, or the modern idealists of Germany, we at once become sensible of his great deficiency. So far, then, respecting his knowledge of the ancient philosophers : it is equally evident, however, that there is a similar want of profundity in his estimate of the more abstruse of the modern metaphysical systems. His conception of the real nature and spirit of Cartesianism was extremely meagre. In that feature of the Cartesian doctrines, to which he particularly refers, namely, the theory of occasional causes, he has evidently misunderstood the whole bearing of the question ; nay, he argues that Descartes himself was clear to lucidity upon this very doctrine, which was the basis of the greatest controversy among his immediate followers.†

\* Edinburgh Review, vol. iii., "On the Philosophy of Perception."

† Lecture 27.

The same deficiency is manifest when he treats of the philosophy of Leibnitz.\* To comprehend and dress up the popular idea attached to his theory of pre-established harmony was sufficiently easy, but we gain not the faintest glimmering from Brown's writings of the fundamental principles of the dynamical philosophy, as developed by that author; so that the theory in question, severed from the system of which it forms a necessary portion, appeared but the monstrous production of a half-crazy brain, instead of being the matured opinion of one of the greatest men in Europe, and the inventor of the differential calculus. Let any one place by the side of Brown's almost ludicrous exposition of this doctrine, that of his French contemporary, Maine de Biran, and then judge which mind had dived most deeply into the spirit of the Leibnitzian philosophy. It would not be difficult to show, that Brown entered with a like hasty partiality into the views of Locke, and that he greatly misunderstood the scepticism of Hume; as the natural consequence of which he rejected the claims of Reid to the victory he won over the conclusions of that modern pyrrhonist. This, however, would lead us into a too lengthened discussion, and is the less necessary, as we have already lightly touched upon the perceptionalist controversy, and shall elucidate it still further in our succeeding remarks.

3. We proceed, therefore, next, to notice Brown's theory of cause and effect, which we regard as the foundation of much that is erroneous throughout his whole system. There are two classes of phenomena open to our observation,—mental and material; otherwise termed internal and external. In both instances we observe change, succession, effects; and consequently, in both cases, we acknowledge, in some sense or other, the existence of *causes*. In the case of mental phenomena, however, we have means of understanding the process of these changes (or, in other words, the nature of causes), which means, in the phenomena of matter, entirely fail us. In the latter case we observe simply the succession of events (and observation can show us no more); in the former case, however, we possess a consciousness, which gives us, in addition to successive phenomena, the distinct idea of effort or power, excited by our will, as the intermediate step by which the two events are conjoined.

Now, in reasoning out a theory of causation, either we may begin with observing material changes, may ground our chief view

\* Lecture 31.



of the case upon them, and from that view proceed to the explanation of spiritual ones; or we may begin with internal phenomena, and carry over the notion we derive from thence, as to the existence of power, into the material world. Those whose philosophy is formed mainly upon the plan and the habit of physical investigations, starting from the external world, are naturally led to deny the existence of power altogether, inasmuch as they find no *sensible* trace of it in nature: on the contrary, those who start from purely internal and spiritual phenomena, have no difficulty in admitting the real existence of power, though invisible to the senses, wherever changes are seen to take place. First, the pure idealist, bending his whole attention upon his internal consciousness, transforms all nature into a system of mental dynamics. Secondly, the moderate idealist, admitting the reality of passive substance, yet maintains that there must be certain forces at work to produce the phenomena *in it*, which we constantly observe around us. Thirdly, the philosopher of the common sense school, like Reid and Stewart, though virtually denying the objective reality of power, yet admits, that we have a distinct metaphysical conception of it subjectively in the operations of our own mind.\* Fourthly, the incipient sensationalist, like Brown, is too much charmed with his method of physical inquiry to give any heed to this metaphysical notion, and hence denies its existence in any other sense than that of "immediate invariable antecedence," still admitting, however, the instinctive necessity of our belief in the perpetual uniformity of cause and effect in nature. And, lastly, the complete sceptic like Hume, as also the complete materialist like Priestley, and the French ideologists, not only deny the notion of efficiency or power, but refer our very belief in the constancy of cause and effect to the influence of experience and association. The position of Brown in the controversy, is thus sufficiently indicated as one in which the existence of power, delegated from the Deity, is altogether denied; the idea of any efficient causes operating in nature rejected; adaptation in causality entirely lost sight of; and the whole phenomena of mind and matter reduced to a series of events, the fact of whose connection we see, the uniformity of which we believe in, but the bond of which is entirely unknown. Brown's first error on this subject is his overlooking our own personal consciousness of effort, the true type of a cause,

\* "The only distinct conception," says Reid, "which I can form of active power is, that it is an attribute in a being, by which he can do certain things if he wills. This, after all, is only a relative conception."—Active Powers, Essay i. chap. 5.

the legitimate verification of the idea of power. Fraught with the instruction of this self-consciousness, we approach the wonders of nature with a new vision; we gaze upon the perpetual succession of movements and changes that are ever taking place around us, and what conviction do they at once suggest? Clearly this—that it is as much impossible for the mere skeleton of nature which we see by the eye, to start forth into activity without some unseen power or force to animate it, as it is for the arm we call our own to act without the energy of the will. Imbued, then, with a fundamental error on this subject, Brown approached the formal investigation of the human mind, and in accordance with the doctrine he had asserted on the question of causation, regarded it not as a spontaneous energy, but as a passive existence subjected absolutely to certain organic impressions from without, and certain fixed laws of consciousness within. It is curious to run through the whole of his lectures, and see how this idea follows him like a spectre, and modifies his opinions on every point. In his classification of mental phenomena, as we before showed, he sees only external and internal *states*; that is, he imagines the mind like an unhappy paralytic put into different positions, and obliged to remain stationless in each until the next force comes to act upon it. With regard to our knowledge of the external world, he cannot think that the soul is able to go forth by its own activity, and seize the reality and nature of objective existence around us; it must wait till a new set of sensations connected with the action of the muscles, teach us the important lesson, that there is veritably an objective world as well as a subjective. How the mind reasons, however, from its muscular feelings, which, *as feelings*, must be purely subjective after all to the world without, and how it can infer anything *beyond* itself from a sensation *within* itself, except by the aid of some primitive belief or intuition, he does not tell. Again, attention, which is pretty generally admitted to express the power of the will over our intellectual operations, stands in the philosophy of Brown for a modification of sensation: it is the state of mind in which “the increased vividness of one sensation produces a corresponding faintness of others co-existing with it.” On the same principle, we find the theory of recollection, which describes it as a species of voluntary memory, wholly rejected, and the process reduced purely to the laws of association. In fine, whether we regard the powers of memory, of judgment, of imagination, or any collateral phenomena, all these various forms of our

mental activity are shown to arise from those fixed laws of suggestion, to the influence of which the mind of man is subjected, as absolutely as a machine to the *primum mobile* by which it acts. Such was the result, and, as we believe, the *necessary* result of the theory of causation, with which Brown entered upon his philosophical career. Once exclude the idea of power from our enumeration of the elements of successive phenomena, and all we have to do is simply to set down the generic changes which our minds undergo, and to define the circumstances under which they take place, leaving no place whatever for the spontaneous action of *the will*, which then becomes absolutely synonymous with *desire*. But without dwelling longer on this topic, which has been ably answered by Herschel, Ballantyne, Maine de Biran, Cousin, and others, we go on to consider,

4. Brown's support of the representationist theory of perception, as another imperfect feature in his philosophy. This theory has been maintained at different times and by different schools in a vast variety of forms. The most simple forms are those of the Epicureans and Peripatetics, the former of whom supposed that the mind comes to a knowledge of material things by means of refined substantial effluxions from them—the latter, that it does so by means of immaterial species or shadowy films, bearing an exact resemblance to the external object. A more subtle, though perhaps more reasonable form of the same theory has been held by many philosophers of later times, (of whom Descartes stands in the foreground,) who have supposed the inward representation to be not a separate existence, but a modification of the mind itself, produced, it may be, by the direct intervention of the Deity, as in the doctrine of occasional causes; or by a pre-established harmony, as maintained by Leibnitz; or by other means which it is not worth while to enumerate. These are, in fact, the particular forms of representationism with which Dr. Reid was acquainted, and against which he directed the chief strength of his argumentation.

There is, however, another view that many have taken of the same hypothesis, which makes the representative object a *modification of the mind*, not produced by any extraneous source, but involved in the very act of perception itself. The process of vision, for example, would be explained, on this principle, in the following manner:—The rays of light come from the object to my eye, and impress an image on the retina: this impression is con-



veyed by the optic nerve to the brain, and the brain produces a change or modification of my mind. The real object of perception, therefore, it is argued, is the change that takes place in the mind; so that, instead of perceiving the external world itself, we only view its forms and changes shadowed forth in our own mental modifications. This was apparently the opinion of Locke; this, the foundation principle of Berkeley's reasoning; and this, likewise, the theory distinctly asserted and maintained by Brown. Let any one carefully peruse his 25th Lecture, and he will find it stated, as clearly as words can state it, that the whole object of our perception is *the mind as affected in a certain manner, and existing in certain states.*\*

The singularity of the case, however, is, that he was not himself aware of the difference between Reid's doctrine of immediate intuitive perception and his own doctrine of representationism; and hence the complicated series of errors and misconceptions, into which he fell in denying Reid's claim to the refutation of the ideal system. Had Brown fully understood his own philosophy, he must have seen, that it could lead to nothing less than a species of subjective idealism, if not to absolute unbelief; that cut off by it from any direct knowledge of the world without, and confined to the perception of our own mental states, we must totally fail of substantiating our faith in external realities against the arguments of the idealist or the sceptic. The practical effect of this doctrine, it is true, so far as our belief in the material world is concerned, could not be very serious, since our daily necessities would oblige us to act in contradiction to it; but its effect upon our confidence in the validity of human knowledge in general, must, if carried out, become lamentable. The instinctive conviction of mankind is, that they perceive the very object itself which is before them, and not a mere representation of it within themselves: once show that this conviction, resting as it does upon our direct conscious-

\* The most complete view which has given been of the various hypotheses on perception in our own, or, as far as I am aware, in any other language, is that of Sir W. Hamilton, in his "Dissertations to Reid's Collected Writings," Note C. He divides the philosophers who have treated of the subject, into A, Presentationists—or those who advocate an immediate consciousness of the objective; and B, Representationists—or those who advocate a knowledge conveyed by some intermediate process. The former, again, are divided into 1. Natural Realists, and 2. Absolute Idealists, both of whom maintain a direct intuition of the real in their own peculiar sense. The latter, who are also termed Cosmothetic Idealists, are divided into two classes—1. Those who regard the representational image as a mode of the percipient mind; and 2. Those who regard it as something apart from the mind, a phantasm or film. To the first of this latter class Dr. Brown belonged, and ignorantly supposed Reid to belong to it also. For all the minor shades of these opinions, see Hamilton's "Reid," p. 816, *et seq.*



ness, is false, and on what grounds can we be justified in trusting the evidence of consciousness in other matters? All necessary and universal truth (which rests upon the evidence of consciousness) is from henceforth rendered uncertain; the foundations of our knowledge are undermined; and we cannot, in any case, give a reason for our belief, which same reason in other cases does not prove entirely fallacious. Brown denies, that the evidence of consciousness respecting the *real object of perception* is to be trusted; but, notwithstanding, he trusts that same evidence implicitly, when it asserts the objective existence of the material world, or the other primary laws of belief; which denial and trust being put together, evolve the conclusion, that our primary beliefs may be inconsistent with each other, that they are not uniformly valid, and that, therefore, nothing can ever be believed at all with an unflinching certainty.

The great argument upon which the representationist system rests is this—that things which are not homogeneous can have no mutual influence upon each other; that the relation of knowledge implies an identity of existence; in plainer words, that matter and mind cannot mutually affect each other *directly*, just because they are not both matter or both mind. This argument, we contend, is purely asservative; it entirely fails of support from reason or fact, nay, is contrary to the very mode of our constitution, as made up of a mind and material organism mutually affecting each other; and therefore, until some plea for it is produced, hardly requires any to be urged against it. The nature of causality in the one case is just as intelligible as in the other; we can as easily imagine the power of mind impressing its influence upon matter, as upon another mind like itself. On the other hand, the system of representationism in any form is beset with difficulties. The chief of these we have already given in the review of Locke, and to them, therefore, for brevity's sake, we must now refer the reader. If any one, however, wishes to see the whole subject discussed fully and satisfactorily, we recommend him to consult the "Edinburgh Review," No. 103, where the philosophy of perception is developed with greater depth, and learning, than perhaps in any other work in our own language.\*

After what we have said about the metaphysical philosophy of Brown, it is hardly worth while to make any distinct reference to

\* We can now refer the student likewise, to the further illustrations of the philosophy of perception, which the author of the article here referred to has given us in his "Dissertations on Reid." See especially Note D.

his ethics. The deepest questions in ethical philosophy he has left untouched, since in no place has he boldly approached the subject of human liberty or necessity ; but the conclusions to which he has come respecting the nature and ground of morals, we believe, are almost universally regarded as unsound, even by those who are the greatest admirers of his metaphysics. His principle here seems to be, that virtue cannot exist independently of virtuous agents ; that in itself it is a mere abstraction, expressing simply the relation between certain actions, and certain emotions which we feel in contemplating them. To this conclusion of course his theory of cause and effect was naturally adapted to lead. If events are known simply as successive, it is folly to seek for any *adaptation* in the one to bring about the other. Now in morals an action is one event, and a certain emotion is the succeeding one ; the former is the universal antecedent, the latter the universal consequent. According to Brown's philosophy, we have no ability to inquire further into the matter ; the cause of the emotion is no better known than efficient causes in nature are ; the word virtue, which men assign as an objective reality, is in fact a mere abstraction expressing the relation between the two events, just as gravitation is an abstraction expressing the unknown relation between two phenomena in the natural world. This conclusion, it is evident, at once interdicts the great question in morals, What is the *cause* of virtuous emotion ? or what is the ground of moral approbation ? —it tells us that there is no such cause, no such ground to be discovered ; that there is nothing in the nature of vicious conduct to produce remorse, nothing in the nature of virtuous conduct to produce approbation ; that the Deity simply has so fixed the succession of events, and that when we have well observed this succession we have arrived at the ultimatum of our possible knowledge. Of course, if this be true, virtue and vice *might* be interchangeable ; and if the mind become so hardened as to approve of sin, sin must at once become virtue ! The ground of all rectitude being *our own personal feeling of approbation*, once let that approbation be reversed, and the relations of right and wrong are reversed also.

That Brown could give no better account of our moral nature than this, is by no means a matter of surprise, when we consider that there is no place in his system for the influence of the *will* properly so called. To solve the problem of the human conscience, we must show that there is a basis laid for responsibility in our free

agency, that our free agency is directed by intelligence, and our intelligence stimulated by moral sensibility. Brown has pointed out the forms of our moral sensibility with great clearness, has hinted at the use of the understanding, but of our free agency has failed to give any satisfactory account; and without this all moral accountability sinks into an empty name. Deluded by his psychological principles, he made no attempt to penetrate behind the veil of our feelings to the real world of moral truth itself; accordingly he has left behind him an ethical system which merely plays upon the surface of phenomena, but fails entirely to show that our moral sentiments are grounded in the eternal nature of things themselves.\*

We might have selected other points from the writings of Brown to comment upon, but those we have already discussed comprehend the most important instances in which his system appears to us to be defective or erroneous. While we admit the great merit which is due to him, on account of his classification, and cannot but admire the beauty of many of his analyses, still in many other, and those some of the most fundamental points, we consider his philosophy to have been a step *backwards*, rather than *onwards* towards the perfection of the science to which he was devoted.

Whilst Brown was thus engaged in remodelling the philosophy of his country, several other minds were employed in the same work, although, perhaps, with less genius, yet, certainly, with more caution. It was not to him alone that the importance of a closer analysis of our mental phenomena suggested itself: we find a similar tendency decidedly manifested in various other writers of the same period. Amongst these we might particularly point out Dr. John Young, professor of moral philosophy in Belfast, who had virtually completed his system, and delivered it, indeed, to his class, *before* the publication of Brown's lectures, although it was not published till the year 1835. Dr. Young, though by no means equal to Brown in natural acuteness or in brilliancy of style, yet added to a clear and comprehensive intelligence great steadiness, and patience in research. This is proved by the fact, that he arrived quite independently of Brown at a classification virtually the same, though unencumbered by any kind of novel phraseology.

\* Brown's lectures on ethics have just appeared in a separate form, introduced by a preface of Dr. Chalmers. In the remarks there made we fully concur; we only wish they had contained a stronger protest against a theory, which if developed cuts at the very root of all "eternal and immutable morality" in itself, and all moral responsibility in man.

He reduced all *intellectual* phenomena to the three\*heads of sensation, memory, and judgment, steering a medium course with considerable skill between the more complicated systems of Reid and Stewart, and the over-simplification of Hartley. We have, in fact, in Dr. Young another instance of the gradual reaction, which has been experienced in Scotland since the time of Stewart, in favor of a more sensational form of metaphysical philosophy; for, although he did not give up his hold upon the fundamental laws of man's belief, yet he everywhere exhibited a strong inclination to derive many of our primary notions from other, and those experimental sources.\*

It might be remarked, however, in justice to another metaphysician of great ability, who was long known as a lecturer, but who never appeared prominently in the literature of his country as an author, I mean Mr. Mylne, the late professor of moral philosophy at Glasgow, that Young unquestionably borrowed much of his system from the class-room of that distinguished philosopher. From what I have learned of those who attended his lectures, and what I have seen of the impulse they gave in prosecuting the work of intellectual analysis, I think there can be little doubt, but that his mind told forcibly upon the philosophy of Scotland during the many years of his professorship. The tendency of his influence, as of those before mentioned, was decidedly sensational; of this character were his analyses of many of our intellectual ideas; of this character, also, was his firm support of utilitarianism in morals; yet, we believe, he explained his views in such a manner, as not materially to injure those great principles of belief for which Reid had so earnestly contended. Somewhat of a similar tendency is the work of the Rev. John Ballantyne on the human mind, the whole of which is marked with considerable analytical acumen, and a corresponding tendency to reduce the laws of thought to a few simple elements. At the same time care is taken, here also, not to open the door to scepticism by invalidating our primary beliefs; and the conclusions, even of Brown himself, in some points, especially that of causation, are very forcibly repelled.

Whilst the writings of Ballantyne may be truly said to be less popular than they deserve, we must mention another philosopher of the Scottish school, who we consider, has, on the contrary, obtained a philosophical reputation considerably beyond his real

\* Young's lectures were published *after* his death, together with a short biography of the author, by William Cairns, A.M., professor of logic at Belfast.



merits—I mean the late Dr. Abercrombie. That there is great intelligence, a tone of lofty morality, and much sincere piety pervading his writings, we are glad to admit, but as works of philosophy, they can never occupy any other than a very inferior position. With the real history of metaphysics, with its more lofty speculations, with its sublimest theories, the author was manifestly entirely unacquainted. He looked upon every question simply from an experimental point of view ; and whatever lay without its precincts was set down as vague and uncertain hypothesis, whose mists were forever dispersed by a purer light. Laying aside the use which the Doctor makes of his medical knowledge, and of the facts which have come under his notice, his works only remind us of Reid without his depth, of Stewart without his learning, of Brown without his genius. At the same time it must be remembered, that Dr. Abercrombie never aspired to the title of being a great philosopher. Few men, we understand, stood higher than he did as a Christian and a philanthropist, and we are willing to believe, that his labors in philosophy were rather intended to *christianize* the moral thinking of his country, than to throw additional light upon the more abstruse questions of human research.

We shall now attempt to sum up our sketch of the Scottish philosophy by a few remarks, which may tend to illustrate its general nature, and point out the position it holds in connection with the other systems, which history and personal observation present. And, first of all, its great excellency, we imagine, consists in its having confirmed, and to a great extent perfected, the true method of metaphysical research. Bacon destroyed the influence which the syllogistic organum had exercised upon the minds of men for centuries past, and furnished the right key to the temple of knowledge. Descartes adapted the Baconian principles to the study of metaphysics, but was too much encumbered by a mass of *a priori* assumptions (though delivered in the form of arguments) to make steady progression in the science. Locke employed the Baconian method with far more success, having first learned to reject the most material errors of the Cartesian philosophy ; but he, too, was still confused by the phraseology of former systems, and biassed by the representationist hypothesis concerning ideas. Reid was one of the first, who, taking the inductive method for his guide, formed by the light it afforded, the conception of a purely reflective method of mental analysis, which should take its stand upon the most intimate facts of the human consciousness.

The long-standing doctrine of ideas, the empirical scepticism of Hume, the lingering remnants of the Cartesian assumptions, all fell one after the other before him; and upon their ruins he laid the foundations of a new system of mental philosophy, free from all illegitimate hypothesis and proceeding throughout upon strictly scientific principles. Just as the students of physical science before Bacon—not content with the simple employment of collating and interpreting facts—sought some hypothetical explanation of them, quite independent of all actual experience; so, the mass of intellectual philosophers previous to Reid, were not able to divest their minds of the necessity of explaining the simple facts of sensation, intellection, &c., by some theory which could never be verified. Reid performed an inestimable service to philosophy, when he showed, that such simple processes must be viewed as ultimate and primitive facts in our constitution, which carry with them their own evidence, and admit of no explanation; nay, that the very attempt to interpret them only plunges us farther into darkness and uncertainty.

The illustration and full application of the true psychological method, then, we regard as the main service of the Scottish philosophy—a service which has not been lost upon the age, and the ulterior benefit of which has yet to be developed in coming generations. On the other hand, the main defects of the Scottish school, particularly since the time of Reid, have attached themselves to these two points—First, the false or at least inadequate view it has taken of the reflective method in mental philosophy—and, secondly, the want of comprehensiveness, superinduced by that inadequacy, as to the legitimate objects and extent of philosophy at large. With regard to the former of these points, let it be kept in mind, that the great ambition of the Scottish philosophy, as seen in Stewart and his successors, has been to establish the purely inductive method of procedure as employed in the Baconian school. The nature of this method is perfectly simple: it enjoins a full and adequate observation of *facts*, and then, from particular instances, rises through several stages of generalization, to the *laws* which regulate their succession. Here, of course, there can be no *intimate* acquaintance with the real objects of research; their essential nature escapes *all* mere observation, for their latent powers and processes can never be made the matter of perceptive or inductive knowledge. On the other hand, when we scan the contents of our own consciousness by the power of *reflection*, we are

engaged in a very different process from that of mere induction, and attain a very different *kind* of knowledge respecting the real object of our research. In the former case, (that of induction,) we can only know our object by mere *phenomenal observation*; in the latter we know it by a *direct consciousness*. In the one case, we can only form a *general notion* of it by a process of abstraction; in the other we have an immediate and concrete apprehension thereof. In the one case we know nothing of its internal or essential constitution; in the other we are enabled by reflection to catch the very forms of our inmost activity.

To say that essences and causes are *equally* unknown whether in mind or matter (as the Scottish school has so often reiterated), implies a subtle misunderstanding of the very nature of *reflection* as a mode of psychological research. Our knowledge of *mind* in the act of reflective consciousness, is perfectly adequate—it reaches the whole extent of its essence—it comprehends the intuition of its existence as a *power* or *activity*, and likewise the observation of all its determinations. To talk of knowing *mind* beyond the direct consciousness of its *spontaneous being*, and all the affections which it can undergo, is absurd;—there is nothing more to *know*; the only reason why we seem to know it so little is, that the process of knowing it *at all* reflectively and philosophically is so difficult, that there are very few who make much way in that species of introspection which it demands. This knowledge, however, when attained to, is a very different thing from the mere classification of phenomena, and leads to a very different result.

To develop this difference, let it be remembered, that in rational psychology, when we have observed and made our classification of the actual facts of consciousness as we find them, we have only *begun* our labor. The next thing after this, is to trace these facts up to their origin; to discover not merely the *law* of operation, but the *reason* of that law; to point out not only the reality of certain principles, but also their *absolute necessity*. To ask respecting a law of succession in the material world, why it must be so, is going altogether beyond the due limits of induction; but to seek the absolute and necessary ground of our mental phenomena, is fairly within the province of reflection, because of the intimate knowledge which consciousness gives us of mind, as at once subject and object.\*

\* I cannot give a better instance of this research into the ultimate principle of mental phenomena, than the following remark of Sir W. Hamilton:—"An exposition of the axiom that positive thought lies in the limitation or conditioning of one or other of

So far, then, we proceed onwards in the subjective sphere, seeking all the while the laws and principles of *thought*, not the mysteries of being. But now a third problem opens before us, namely, to sound the *legitimacy* of our knowledge—to show how far the phenomena of consciousness give us the realities of existence; to pass in this way from the subjective to the objective region of philosophical research. Now the link of connection between these two regions is found in the IDEA OF A CAUSE. The first thing in the philosophy of causation, of course, is to observe the simple and palpable *fact*, that on the perception of successive events we have the notion of a cause. This, all admit as a fact, even Hume himself. The next thing is to trace this notion of a cause back to its origin. Hume, on his sensational principles, attributed it all to association; a deeper philosophy, on the contrary, has referred it to a fundamental principle of our nature—namely, the *principle of causality*, which, as possessing the character of universality and necessity, may be looked upon as an absolute principle, such as could only exist in fundamental, not at all in merely inductive philosophy. Now it is, then, that having observed the actual fact of the case, and having traced it to the primitive principle, there arises the further question—how far does this subjective principle contain the evidence of an objective reality, and by what means may we pass from *thought* to *existence*? To find this passage, we must look to the point where thought and existence actually unite, and that point of union is the mind itself. Mind is both object and subject at once. Viewed as a succession of internal processes, it is simply an object exhibiting various forms of thought, feeling, &c., but nothing more: on the contrary, to the pure internal consciousness, it is a *subject*—a real activity, an essence, a being. Thus cause is a mere notion, and causality is a necessary principle, both of them subjective; but our intuitive consciousness detects still further an activity, a real spontaneous *existence*, a noumenon, of which the principle of causality is a form or determination.

Having found, then a veritable existence distinct from mere phenomenon in the depth of our own consciousness, and concealed under the principle of causality, we can proceed onwards

two extremes, neither of which, as unconditioned, can be realized to the mind as possible, and yet of which, as contradictories, one or other must, by the fundamental laws of thought, be recognized as necessary—the exposition of this great but unenounced axiom would show, that some of the most illustrious principles are only its subordinate modifications, as applied to certain primary notions, intuitions, data, forms or categories of intelligence,—as existence, quantity, quality, &c. Such modifications, for example, are the principles of cause and effect, substance and phenomenon,” &c.



in the objective sphere to a wider observation. In like manner as inward intuition gives us a direct apperception of the soul as a real existing activity, so outward intuition, or *perception*, gives us a direct knowledge of the material world, as something distinct from *the me*. Here, as in the other case, we have the principle of causality as a link between subject and object—between thought and existence. For perception itself, which Reid assumed as an absolutely primitive fact of mind, is really but an application of the principle of causality. In perception, we perceive a relation between subject and object, the nature of which is the following:—All those phenomena which refer to the soul itself, are known by direct consciousness to spring from its own activity—the phenomena of perception, however, we feel to be the qualities of some objective existence operating upon *us*. The affirmation, immediate and instinctive, of a real objective cause exerting its power upon us, is the most ultimate fact in perception;\* so that it is the direct consciousness of self, as a force or cause, which leads us onward in the objective sphere of knowledge to the affirmation and intuition of a not-self—an external world as a counter force.†

Here, however, the process does not come to an end. The powers of nature are dependent, relative, and finite; they all point us, therefore, to a self-existent unity of power, from which they sprang. The power of mind, as an intelligent cause, or personality, is relative and finite also; and this points us to an infinite and absolute personality. Combine the notions of a unity of all power as seen in nature, and a perfect type of all personality as seen in man, and we have the conception of a *God*. Of God as the infinite, the absolute, accordingly, we have a direct apperception. The light of primitive truth falls immediately upon the eye of the soul. Had we to reason ourselves into the existence of the material world, and were we to define perception as the act of the mind in conducting this reasoning to its result, we should never find our way out of the subjective circle. Perception, however, is a direct gazing upon the world without, by the medium of its immediate *action* upon ourselves, and here, in this *spontaneous* reception of truth, we find *the objectively real*. Exactly in the same manner, had we to reason up to the absolute, all we could do would be to personify our ideas; but pure reason, like pure perception, receives objective truth spontaneously: it gazes upon its

\* See Cousin's "Cours de Phil. Moderne—Ecole Ecossaise," p. 428.

† Hence the idea of substance is identical with that of *cause*, and the dynamical theory of the world is established.

object with an immediacy which suffers no error or doubt to intervene, and gives in this way a guarantee for its legitimacy, which it is impossible to resist. "When," observes Cousin, on the occasion of a finite contingent relative existence, which experience attests, "I conceive the infinite, the necessary, the absolute, the universal; when in presence of the phenomena which I observe in the world, I contemplate the great laws of that world, those laws which form the harmony of its movements, the order and beauty of its plan; when in retiring within the precincts of my own nature, I attach the phenomena so variable and evanescent which I behold there to one simple, identical, and immovable essence, I do not imagine, I do not dream, I do not compose, I simply *conceive*. My conception is a necessary and legitimate act of my mind, as much as the most simple perception."

On what authority, then, we ask, do these pure conceptions rest? what is it that separates them from the fictions of imagination? why do I *know* my imaginations to be mere fictions, whilst I attribute a real objective existence to the Infinite Being, to the laws of the universe, to the essence of the soul? Here are questions *grounded* indeed upon the facts of our consciousness, but requiring as answer, somewhat more than a mere classification of facts; requiring, in truth, nothing less than a critick of those purely rational, or metaphysical intuitions, in which the first principles of *ontology* are grounded. So far then with regard to the reflective *method*; let us now see how the scope of philosophy becomes enlarged, under its auspices.

In physical science it is a well-known canon, that the higher be the generalization we attain to, and the more primitive the law we evolve, just so much the more powerfully and fruitfully can we reason downwards by a deductive process, to the development of those "*axiomata media*" in which our knowledge mainly consists. Exactly so is it also in the philosophy of mind. If the philosophy of mind be merely that experimental classification of the more obvious facts, which is all that many understand under the name of psychology, then the applications of it can be only very few and very fruitless: it can simply take its rank among the secondary sciences of observation; and even there can challenge comparatively little interest. But if, on the contrary, by inward reflection we can trace our ideas up to their primitive and necessary forms, if we can take a deeper insight into the working of mind, as the agent in all human endeavor; if, separating the mat-

ter of our knowledge from the form, we can gaze upon the actual types and processes of all thought; then it is evident we can reason downwards deductively with far greater power and far more fruitful results upon all the primary branches of human research.

A sound theory of morals, for example, can only be looked for when we start from this intimate view of mind as a spontaneous activity. For want of this a world of false reasoning has been employed to sink us down to the hypothesis of utter fatalism, or what is virtually the same thing, of a philosophical necessity. The due comprehension of the religious nature, again, can never be hoped for except it be brought up to light from the very depth of our being. History can only be studied philosophically, by tracking the development of fundamental ideas along the pathway of human civilization. Sociology will only advance in proportion as the most intimate constitution of human nature is unfolded, and its spiritual laws laid bare. In a word, whatever depends upon the development of human thought, can only be placed in the daylight of *science*, by a philosophy which sinks beneath the mere classification of phenomena, down to the appreciation of the more intimate laws and principles of the human mind.

Still greater become the applications of a fundamental philosophy, when from the pure apperception of the infinite we descend with the torch of divine truth in our hands, and re-enter the regions of nature and humanity. Nature now becomes all radiant with *idea*. We see in its wondrous forms of beauty and marvellous processes, the thought of Deity embodying itself in the finite; while man, the highest expression of creative power, becomes a sphere of philosophical observation, in which we can study the highest truths of the Divine nature and perfections. In a word, only let us begin with a deep reflective consciousness of the human soul, with its innate powers and spiritual laws, and the *fruitfulness* of our philosophy, as it gradually develops, stands in the most marked contrast with the *fruitlessness* which has ever attended, and *confessedly* must attend, a mere experimental psychology. In truth, wherever such schools of psychology have conferred any benefit on philosophy at all, they have only done so by stepping out of the experimental sphere into the fundamental and reflective; just as Reid did, when he established his theory of immediate perception, and as the Scottish school now does, when it stands up for the



validity of the respective principles of *causality* and *teleology*, in the grounds of its natural theology.

Viewed, then, in this light, metaphysical philosophy, instead of being a science having its own separate objects, and co-ordinate with other sciences, is really a kind of "*prima philosophia*," which underlies all the rest. It is conversant, in a sense, with every object; it touches upon the whole matter of human knowledge; only it seeks to trace it up to first principles, to exhibit the abstract forms under which it must be viewed, and to show the primary laws from which it springs. In this sense there is a philosophy of nature, a philosophy of art, a philosophy of religion, a philosophy of history, as well as a philosophy of mind; every branch of human knowledge may, in fact, be traced back till it come within that small circle of the sphere which metaphysical science claims as its own peculiar province. Hence philosophy, in its highest application, is the reference of the contingent to the absolute, the grounding of facts in their necessary principles; it is the science which looks beneath the phenomenal world either of matter or mind, and inquires into the ultimate realities of both.\*

\* I have been somewhat more explicit on the above points than before, to prevent such misunderstandings as the learned and excellent author of the review of my first edition, in the "North British," has unwarily fallen into. He says of my former remarks, (No. xii. p. 318,) "We have really been making it an express effort to ascertain the starting point of this ontology," or 'loftier region of thought,' over which he longs to expatiate, and to scale the heights of the '*Prima Philosophia*,' and all that we can find, all that he himself alleges, is but these three substrata to come and go upon. Now, though, by a fundamental law of the human understanding, we believe in a substratum for the Deity—a substratum for man—a substratum for the universe, we cannot for our lives imagine what more we know of them than that they barely exist; nor how it is that these three bare entities can be turned, like geometrical definitions, into the germs of reasoning and endless discovery. We fear that they will be of as little avail for progress as the abstract ideas of Plato. However, we say, let him again try, but would further bid our aspiring young philosopher 'remember Kant's dove.' \*\*\* It might restrain many an Ixionic flight."

I beg to assure my friendly critic, that I *shall* try again and again, until something more fruitful than Scotch psychology comes of it; in the meantime, however, I must put my "*prima philosophia*" upon a fairer footing than that upon which he has left it to stand. Let us apply, first, the *argumentum ad hominem*. The critic believes in a substratum for the soul—the world—the Deity. On what ground? Upon a fundamental law of the human understanding. But how is the validity of this law established? Not by a mere inductive psychology, but, simply and solely, by this very "*prima philosophia*," this very ontology, which is so decried. When Descartes established the spirituality of the soul by his reflective process—his "*Cogito ergo sum*"—he performed an office for which Reid could speak of him with deepest admiration. When Reid himself overturned the scepticism of Hume, and established his theory of perception, he too was working altogether in the region of a "*prima philosophia*," and on that ground alone has occupied his high place in the philosophical world. Nay, when the critic himself, in his own eloquent style, argued out the being of a God on the principle of *final causes*, on what was all the strength of his argument based, but upon the objective validity of the human reason in these its fundamental laws? The Cartesian and the Scottish principles on these topics are alike purely ontological. Take away their ontological force, and they are valueless.

But we are anxious that the *meaning* of ontology should be cleared up a little.



We must proceed, however, to make good our view of the Scottish school in this particular, by a little closer examination of its main positions. The primitive elements of all our knowledge, as we have often repeated, are finite mind, nature, and God. The Scottish philosophy contains all three of these ideas reflectively, but it regards them all from an experimental, rather than an abstract or a fundamental point of view; and on that account cannot be regarded as sufficiently deep in its researches.

1. Let us view this as it regards the notion of finite mind. This forms, without doubt, the chief element in their metaphysics (and on this ground it is that we have classed them under the head of idealism); but what have we from that school which can answer to the idea of being a philosophy of human nature, spiritually considered, in its fullest extent? The more obvious phenomena of mind, it is true, *as they appear in the individual*, are investigated and classified by it, with much patience and success; but this being done, little attempt is made to refer such phenomena to their primary and fundamental principles. In this respect it differs widely from the critical philosophy of Kant. Kant began his criticism by investigating the conditions on which philosophy at all is possible; he undertook to survey the whole extent of our consciousness, to show the grounds of all human knowledge, and the limits to which it is confined. To accomplish this, it was not sufficient either to reduce our various mental states to a few general heads, or to enumerate a number of primitive facts attested by common sense to be infallibly true; it was necessary to go a step further, and to discover the very laws of our mental constitution

The critic says above, "that he can find it in nothing but the three bare substrata beforementioned to come and go upon." Now, we beg to observe, that ontology has nothing to do with *bare undetermined existence*. This is, in fact, a mere fiction of the imagination. Abstract being is a nonentity, and the Hegelian equation *Sein* equal to *Nichts* is perfectly true. Ontology has to do with being in its most fundamental determinations and necessary laws, so far as they can be ascertained. It strives to look beneath phenomena, as mere matters of observation and induction. But it never attempts to view bare undetermined existence, for the very sufficient reason, that no such existence has a being out of our own abstractions. Ontology, however, in its proper department, has assuredly reasoned out many a fundamental truth. It has looked deeply into the inmost constitution of the soul, and done far more than merely classify phenomena; it has well-nigh *established* a dynamical theory of the material world; it is pushing onwards its investigations into the nature of life, showing it to be the result of antagonistic forces; it is trying to show how all things subsist in God, without driving us into the abyss of pantheism. To whatever extent such generalizations can be safely carried on, they do become as fruitful as geometrical definitions; they pour new light into every prominent region of human research, and give us a distant glimpse of the hope, that some day our knowledge may verily find its unity in this very *Prima Philosophia* itself. Doubtless many an Ixionic flight will take place here, as in everything else, before the high argument is fully reached; but we prefer to fly even with the chance of an occasional fall, than to do like the Scottish psychology—never to soar at all. We are convinced that our wings are not all waxen.

upon which these primitive beliefs rest. In doing this he took care to separate the subjective element from the objective in all our conceptions ; he showed how much of every notion comes from without, and how much from within ; what portion of it is due to the external phenomenon, and what is due to the mind itself, by means of which it is comprehended ; and thus he arrived (we will not now determine how correctly) at the subjective conditions under which everything is necessarily viewed, at the very forms or categories of the understanding. Whatever opinion we may have of Kant's peculiar theory in this respect, unquestionably it was an aim worthy his all-comprehensive genius, to seek for the groundwork of our universal notions in the depths of our own being, and thus to refer all the principles of common sense, all the primary laws of belief, back to their source in the subjective forms of the understanding and the reason. No such survey of the human consciousness have we in Reid himself, much less so in his successors.

There is another point, to which we must next refer, in respect of which the Scottish school has ever been defective. While it has investigated the phenomena of the individual mind with much ability, it has neglected the phenomena of mind in the aggregate, as seen in the historical development of humanity at large. The philosophy of history is one of the most interesting branches of intellectual science. We look back to the earlier periods of the world, and we see men existing in a primitive state with none of the arts of life, none of the results of science, none of the refinements of society. We see them soon combining for mutual benefit or defence into larger communities, and beginning to cultivate some of the simple branches of literature and philosophy. The Asiatic monarchies, after having thus gradually risen and played their part in the destinies of the world, are overthrown by a more energetic race, among whom poetry, eloquence, and philosophy are brought to a hitherto unknown degree of perfection. These again are swallowed up by the gigantic power of the Roman empire, which having itself been imbued with a new element by the power of Christianity, casts the seed of moral and spiritual vitality among the rude barbarian tribes by which it is itself overwhelmed, and thus prepares the way for the grand display of moral and intellectual power which the Christian civilization has exhibited upon the theatre of the modern world. It is the part of intellectual philosophy to trace the great ideas which have aided, or rather forced onwards the advancement of mankind ; to show under what mental

circumstances every nation has emerged from its darkness; by what laws it has progressed; and how each one has in its turn contributed to the development of the mighty elements, which ever lay potentially in the bosom of humanity. The history of civil institutions, of art, of science, of literature, nay, the history of philosophy itself, each has its philosophy; all, in fact, being so many different phenomena, which the human mind *viewed in the aggregate* presents, and which must be carefully taken into account, if we would rightly estimate its capacity, and trace the influences under which it has been unfolded.

This again leads us to the great problem of human life, and of human destiny. What purpose is the mind of man intended to answer in the world? and to what point is it tending? If there be one fact of our consciousness more manifest than another, it is that the spirit finds not its full satisfaction upon earth. Why are we placed, then, in a state where suffering is certain, more or less, to embitter our days, and where joy, when we obtain it, is but a transitory glimpse of a happiness which we may conceive of, but may never obtain? Generation after generation has passed away; their minds, like our own, having formed plans and purposes, which they were never destined to execute, and which, if they had been accomplished, would only have increased, instead of satiating, the thirst for happiness and immortality; their hearts, like our own, have beat high with hopes and expectations which never could be fulfilled. What is the interpretation of all these phenomena? Does philosophy tell us anything or nothing of human destiny here and hereafter? These inquiries are not satisfied by a reference simply to the immateriality, or to the inferred immortality of the soul; we need to rise to a higher view of human life; to interpret it by an appeal to the whole stream of history; to probe the depths of our being by a solemn reflection upon all the facts it presents; and to draw the conclusions to which those facts seem necessarily to lead us.

To do this, of course, man's religious nature must be appealed to; and this appeal leads us into a region of internal facts, as veritable as any of the others which reflection unfolds to us—facts which we cannot leave out of our estimate of the human mind, without robbing it of one of its most remarkable and most distinctive features. All great and deep-searching systems of philosophy have struggled at the solution of these questions; they have all attempted to explain the ground of human duty, human suffering,



and human destiny ; and if the problem has never been fully solved, yet it cannot be denied that much light has been thrown upon it by the investigations to which it has been subjected. In one word, every great system of philosophy has included, as an essential part of its whole structure, the *philosophy of religion*. Admit, as we freely do, that revelation here comes to our aid, and sheds a flood of light upon the whole subject, still that does not repress or render useless the researches of our own understanding on the subject. For, in the first place, revelation puts everything before us in its popular and practical aspect, and leaves very much on all speculative questions to be elucidated by our own thinking ; and then, even supposing we accept a truth on the ground of its being revealed, yet still it is an object of no little interest to show, that the same truth is not only consistent with, but may be actually deduced from, the axioms of a sound philosophy. We feel convinced, therefore, that the Scottish philosophy will never take a firm and lasting hold upon mankind, until it points us to the solution of some at least of the great questions, which ever and anon rise up before our view, with which we are from time to time tormented and perplexed, but which, when once conceived, we can never again bid depart from our thoughts.

2. But we must refer next to the second of the primitive notions, which lie at the foundations of human knowledge, that of *nature*, and consider in what manner our northern metaphysicians have dealt with this idea. To determine the objective reality, which we attach to this notion, was one of the chief objects of Reid's philosophy ; but this aim having been accomplished, the subject has rested, with little exception, in the same position ever since. The investigation of the external *laws* of the material world, of course, comes under the department of physical science. On the other hand, the great metaphysical question, which it behooves philosophy to grapple with, is this,—What is it, in the state of mind called *perception*, that comes from the objective reality ; and what is it that comes from the laws of our own intellectual nature ? It is pretty generally admitted, that this state of consciousness arises from the union of the subjective with the objective, that it is a felt relation between nature and self. What, then, in every case is due to the subjective, and what to the objective element, and what conclusion does this lead us to draw with regard to the nature of matter in general ?

Now every ontological question of this nature is virtually pro-



scribed by the Scottish school. Instead of doing this, our aim should be, beginning with the experimental or psychological method, to find a legitimate passage from psychology to ontology, and to determine, as far as we are able, the mode and the nature of material existence. After all the disputes about infinite divisibility on the one hand, and ultimate atoms on the other, it may perhaps at length be found, that a system of monadology is the most intelligible theory; that the most correct notion of matter is that of a combination of forces, which produce certain impressions upon our minds, and to which those minds necessarily attribute certain material properties. Thus it may turn out that the mode, in which we are now accustomed to view material masses in physical science, namely, as powers acting in certain directions, is *metaphysically* as well as mechanically true.

Again: when we view the variety of the material universe—when we perceive the order, harmony, and beauty which everywhere subsist, when we rise to contemplate its immensity, until the mind is lost in the unending series of system upon system, which reveal themselves in the boundless fields of space—the great problem unfolds itself before us—What purpose is all this gigantic machinery now accomplishing, and what is its final destiny? We admit that this problem has never yet received its complete answer from the efforts of philosophy; but yet we say, that the purpose and destiny of nature, viewed in her mysterious existence, in her endless forms of beauty, in her profusion of glory, in her solemn movements, and in her inconceivable immensity, present a subject of philosophic speculation too real, too awful, and too sublime to be hurried off the stage of inquiry, as lying beyond the reach of our present faculties to fathom. The attempt to fathom this question has often indeed merged into a pantheistic result. But the fact of false theories being maintained, does not render the search for truth any the less important or legitimate. Quite certain it is, that the more nature is investigated with a right mind and a devotional heart, the more closely it brings us into contact with the Divine; nay, that it is the want of recognizing the spiritual and ideal in nature, which has so often betrayed the naturalist into a cold and heartless atheism. Generally, then, we cannot but feel that the philosophy of Scotland has been deficient in explaining the proper existence of matter, and casting a light upon the great idea of nature herself.

3. The last idea which the Scottish philosophy, in common with

every true philosophy, contains, is that of the infinite, absolute, unconditioned existence, *i. e.*, of God. This idea gives rise to natural theology, which is treated of with considerable success by some of the northern metaphysicians, so far at least as their researches reach. The points here, which need taking up more fully, are, first, the origin of the idea of an absolute being in the human mind ; and, secondly, the relation of the Divine power and energy to man on the one hand, and to nature on the other. With regard to the former of these points, the argument from design has been drawn out most fully and beautifully by the Scottish writers, from Reid down to Chalmers ; but all have gone upon the supposition that the *conception of the absolute* is already in the mind, and have simply attempted to prove its objective reality. Nature can show an infinity of *power*, in perpetual operation, and its harmony may point us to a *unity* from which it emanates ; but nature can never give us the idea of an *infinite personality*. Here we have to fall back simply *upon the soul*—the absolute starting-point of all theology.\* The second point would be a comment upon the scriptural doctrine—"In God we live, and move, and have our being." This is a truth, which has more meaning in it than the cursory reading of it gives us ; it evidently has a reference to the mysterious dependence of the human spirit upon the Divine, showing that we are all emanations from the infinite essence, and though gifted with a distinct personality, yet that we are but waves in the great ocean of existence, ever rolling onwards to our eternal home in the bosom of God. In the same manner as God holds an intimate relationship with all mental, so also does he with all material dependent existence—a relationship which it is the endeavor of every comprehensive system of philosophy to explain. It is true, the Scottish philosophy has somewhat touched upon this point in discussing the question of efficient and secondary causes, but yet so imperfectly, that it is impossible to derive either light or satisfaction from its conclusions. There is perhaps no point which more requires to be elucidated, and none which comes more within the compass of metaphysics, as acknowledged in Scotland, than the theory of what we should term the secondary and delegated powers of nature. We are aware that revelation may cast light upon this, and many other of the questions we have mentioned, and that in some instances it affords a very distinct answer to them ; but the object of philosophy, as applied to these subjects, is

\* See Appendix, Note A.

to place them upon another footing, to deduce them in a connected chain of reasoning from generally admitted facts and principles, to make them the objects, not of faith but of science, and thus to show the unity, as far as the parallel can be traced, between the conclusions of reason and the dictates of revelation. Thus, in fine, the Scottish school of metaphysics, though containing all the fundamental ideas of human knowledge, and consequently the germs of a most complete system, yet appears wanting in *comprehensiveness* as it regards each separate department. It answers, in a word, to the description given of it by the celebrated reviewer before referred to ; that, namely, of a preparation for philosophy, rather than a philosophy itself.

Before we close our remarks, however, upon Scotland, we must not forget to mention one publication to which Europe itself is indebted as a literary organ, and which, though partaking predominantly of the mind of the country in which it originated, yet has ever looked upon philosophical questions with an enlarged and liberal spirit. The "Edinburgh Review," to which it will be at once seen that we refer, has been the channel, through which some of the master minds of Scotland as well as England have from time to time given their thoughts to the world. Among the philosophical writers who have enriched its pages, we shall mention two, one living, and one some years since gone to his rest, who have contributed not a little to keep alive in our country the declining spirit of metaphysical research.

Sir James Mackintosh, the latter of those to whom we refer, possessed all the qualifications for a philosopher of the highest order. Educated originally as one of the Scottish school, he soon learned, on leaving his native country, to overstep the limits to which he was there confined ; and amidst the labors of an arduous professional life, devoted what time he could spare from his duties to a most widely-extended course of philosophical reading and study. It is chiefly as a moralist that Sir James Mackintosh stood pre-eminent ; and the ardor, the depth, and the learning with which he combated the selfish systems, and pleaded for the authority and sanctity of the moral faculty in man, contributed perhaps more than any single cause not of a religious nature, to oppose the bold advances of utilitarianism, and infuse a healthier tone into the moral principles of the country. Without signifying our adherence to his peculiar theory respecting conscience, we still regard his thoughts and speculations as taking eminently the right direc-



tion ; and had he obtained leisure to mature his views, and give them to the world in his own forcible and glowing style, it is the opinion of some best able to judge upon the subject, (e. g. Robert Hall and Dr. Chalmers,) that he would have placed the whole theory of morals upon a higher and more commanding position, than it had ever occupied before in this country. With the exception of his admirable dissertation on ethical philosophy in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," his chief metaphysical writings are to be found in the pages of the "Edinburgh Review," where the practised eye can easily detect his articles by the combination of profuse learning, and profound thought, with a brilliancy of style, and a gentleness of criticism, alike significant of his intellectual power and his kindly affections. As a metaphysician, Mackintosh tended decidedly to the more spiritual school of philosophy, and had he read as deeply into the German authors as he himself projected, would undoubtedly have given a great spur to the renewed study of the higher metaphysics. As it is, however, he can never fill that space in the philosophical history of our country, for which his genius eminently fitted him.

Respecting the other writer, to whom we have alluded, namely, Sir William Hamilton, we shall say less than we should feel inclined to say were he not a living author, from whom the public has still some further expectations, and were it not improper to remark upon theories which as yet have not been published beyond the privacy of the lecture-room. Enough, however, has already appeared from his pen, to warrant the assertion, that no history of Modern Philosophy can be complete without giving due place to the researches there instituted. We might refer to the elaborate articles, which have appeared in the Edinburgh Review, on "The Philosophy of Perception," on "Cousin's Eclecticism," and on "Modern Logic," each of which contains germs of philosophical principles which admit of indefinite expansion ; but we are happy to be able to refer to a more complete, though still unfinished exposition of his philosophy, in the Dissertations appended to his recent edition of Reid's collected writings.\* Should any one suppose that the editor has taken his stand upon those writings, as containing in all respects a true philosophy, he will be

\* In our former edition we ventured to ask the Edinburgh philosopher, "Why he had neglected the office of raising Scotland to that high rank of reputation which it formerly enjoyed among the philosophical countries of Europe." We could not have had the commencement of a more satisfactory reply, than that afforded by the above-mentioned Dissertations ; and only hope that before the year is past it may be completed.

*See his 'Lectures on Philosophy' - also his 'Lectures on Metaphysics' and 'Lectures on Logic' lately published*



much mistaken, for in no work of the age are many of Reid's principles more completely overthrown. The works of the great founder of the school of "common sense," are simply regarded as coming, *upon the whole*, nearer to the truth than any other; as forming, in fact, a kind of centre between contending systems on which a high and refined eclecticism can plant itself, in order to grasp those catholic principles of human thinking, to which all philosophy has virtually done homage. Let us see the results.

Reid's system is usually termed the philosophy of "common sense," that is to say, one which accepts the primary beliefs ordinarily received by all mankind as the ultimate criterion of truth. The first thing, then, to which the editor addresses himself is, to expound the meaning of the doctrine, and illustrate the purport of the argument of common sense.\* To do this, he shows that in all reasoning we must sink back upon certain fundamental facts of consciousness; the only thing we have to guard against is, 1. "That we admit nothing unwarrantably—not even an original datum of consciousness itself; 2. That we embrace *all* which *are* original data of consciousness, with their legitimate consequences; and 3. That we exhibit each in its integrity, neither distorted nor mutilated. It is the want of observing these precautions which has led to the multiplication of philosophical systems, in every conceivable aberration from the unity of truth; so that philosophy has simply to return to *natural consciousness*, in order to return both to unity and truth."

The next point taken up, is to show the "legitimacy and legitimate *application* of the argument of common sense."† This proceeds on two suppositions—1. That the proposition to be proved by it is identical with, or necessarily evolved out of a primary datum of consciousness; and 2. "That the primary data of consciousness are one and all of them admitted to be true." These being granted, nothing hinders the argument of common sense from being valid for all purposes of philosophy.

The third point to be shown, is, that the above suppositions *must* be admitted; that they are strictly philosophical in their character; and that no exception, therefore, can be made against a system of philosophy which is professedly built upon them.‡

The fourth section proposes to investigate the essential characters by which the principles of common sense are discriminated.

\* Note A. sec. 1.

‡ Note A. sec. 3.

† Note A. sec. 2.

These are found to be—1. Their incomprehensibility as to *why* they are; 2. Their simplicity; 3. Their necessity and absolute universality; 4. Their comparative evidence and certainty. These characters being determined, the last two sections enter into a long and learned historical investigation of the nomenclature of fundamental philosophy, and the general recognition of the principles of common sense by philosophers of every age and country.

In the second note (note B), the author proceeds to exemplify the distinction between presentative and representative knowledge, as affording a basis for the *true* theory of perception. The principal points of this distinction may be briefly stated. The one kind of knowledge is *simple*, the other *complex*; in the one, there is only a single object involved, in the other, there are two—the *reality* and the *idea*; the one is absolute, the other relative; the judgment involved in the one is assertatory, that in the other problematic; the one is self-sufficient, the other is not self-sufficient; the one is complete or adequate, the other incomplete or inadequate. These may serve to explain the principal differences between a knowledge, which we obtain by a direct intuition, and that which is conveyed by a mediating idea, or conception. In the second section, the errors of Reid and other philosophers are pointed out, and the way paved for a clear and well-defined doctrine on the subject.

In note C, the editor proceeds first to expound systematically the different schemes of external perception, which are to be found in the different systems of philosophy. Philosophers, in respect to the question of perception, have been either, 1. Presentationists; or, 2. Representationists. 1. Presentationists may proceed upon one of two plans. Either they may abolish the *representing* object, or they may abolish the *real* object. In the former case we have natural realism, as in Reid; in the latter, we have pure subjective idealism, as in Fichte. 2. Representationists are also of two kinds; either they make the representing image or idea a mode or modification of the mind itself, or they regard it as a separate existence. In the former case, we have a theory of ideas like Locke and Brown; in the latter, we have the ideal system of Aristotle or Democritus. For the minor shades of these doctrines, and Reid's precise position, we must refer our readers to the work itself, which will amply repay them for the closest investigation.\*

The next note (D) enters at length into the difficult question of

\* Note C. secs. 1 and 2.

the primary and secondary qualities of bodies, and gives a vast amount of information, critical and historical, upon the physiological question of sensation and perception. This being accomplished, the whole subject of perception is summed up by a contrast between the author's own views and those of the earliest Scottish school, together with certain historical notices on the "*rappports du physique et du moral*," in man. Some contributions towards a history and a theory of the doctrine of association, complete abruptly the dissertations so far as they at present extend; and must leave, we imagine, upon every mind that feels at all interested in such topics, the devout hope, that a work so auspiciously commenced, may ere long satisfy the anticipation it cannot but excite with reference to its early completion.

On the whole, we cannot but regard these dissertations as the most valuable contribution to the progress of a true philosophy, in our country, within the present century. There is no evasion of difficulties, no blenching of the intellectual eye before the pure light of the deepest truth; no dimness of vision accruing from the long and intense gaze within, which such subjects demand. On the contrary, we have the highest questions, which even the German mind can treat of, brought down into the light of "*common sense*," and see a far nearer approximation towards adjusting the respective claims of all the primary systems of Europe, than has before been witnessed in the philosophical literature of our country.

## SECT. II.—*The German School of the Nineteenth Century.*

We come now to that branch of the idealistic school, which if it has exceeded all others in obscurity, has also far excelled them in depth and originality. In entering upon the field of modern German metaphysics, we must bespeak beforehand the good-will of the reader, that he may not be easily offended with the strangeness of the phraseology, or the dryness of the abstractions; trusting that the pleasure of any new idea that is gained will compensate for the uninviting manner in which it may be communicated. On our own part, we shall divest the subject of its bristling formulas as far as we are able, and use the ordinary language of philosophy, whenever it can be done with advantage, without making the obscurity of the original still more obscure.

It should ever be kept in mind, that the great aim of the German

philosophy is, in many respects, very different from the main purpose of intellectual science in our own country. The analysis of the powers and faculties of the human mind, which with us is the chief point, is among the Germans comprehended in one very subordinate division, generally termed psychology ; while their *chief* endeavors are directed to the solution of the three great problems, which relate to the existence and the nature of *God*, of the *universe*, and of *human freedom*. The phenomena, both of the internal and external world, are ever shifting ; what exists this moment is gone the next ; what is true for to-day, is not true for to-morrow. Now, our own philosophy, whether physical or mental, attempts not, for the most part, to go beyond the limits of this scene of phenomena, but, taking its position in the centre of it, seeks to observe the generic characters, which the phenomena themselves present, and arrange them in the most convenient order. Not so the philosophy of Germany. Convinced that mere phenomena cannot be self-existent realities, it begins by inquiring after the *principle* from which they spring ; it seeks for a uniform and unchangeable basis, which underlies all the fleeting appearances of things ; it demands truth which must be *eternally* truth, and from which, as the prime unconditioned existence, everything else has proceeded. Not content with knowing what *is*, it aims at discovering what *must be* ; and then seeks to trace the whole creative process by which the universe in all its multiplicity has flowed by eternal laws from the self-existent *one*. The very first requisite, therefore, in understanding the rationale of the German philosophy, is to fix the eye of the mind upon the notion of "*the absolute*," and thus to pass mentally beyond the bounds of changing, finite, conditioned existence, into the region of the unchangeable, the infinite, the unconditioned.

That we have some idea (positive or negative) of an independent and absolute existence, from which all finite and dependent being has emanated ; that we have some notion of a first cause, from which all secondary causes are derived ; that our reason struggles to look beneath the veil of phenomena, that is spread before our senses, to the abiding reality in its eternal repose, which sustains them, is undeniable. Revelation *cannot* unfold to us the existence of this great first cause, since its whole authority rests upon that very fact, and it *does* not unfold to us the nature and constitution of the universe. If we would understand these things, we must philosophize ; we must look out upon the changing world, and our



reason must there see the unchangeable basis which upholds it; we must look in upon our finite and dependent minds, and view there the indestructible evidence for an infinite and independent Being, by which they too are sustained.

The philosophy of the absolute—that which seeks to penetrate into the *principles* of things—although it may seem strange to our modes and habits of thought, yet has played a great part in the scientific history of the world. It formed the basis of the ancient speculations of the Asiatic world. It characterized some of the most remarkable phases of the early Greek philosophy, particularly that of the Eleatic school. Plato, with all the lofty grandeur of his sublime spirit, sought for the absolute, in the archetypes existing in the Divine mind. The Alexandrian philosophers proposed to themselves the same high argument; mingling their theories with the mysticism of the East, and calling, even, to their aid, the lights of the Christian revelation. In more recent times Spinoza gave currency to similar investigations, which were soon moulded into a system of stern and unflinching pantheism; and in him we see the model, upon which the modern idealists of Germany have renewed their search into the absolute ground of all phenomena. It is, in fact, in the various methods by which it is supposed that we are conducted to the absolute, whether by faith, intuition, or reason, that the different phases of the German metaphysics have originated; and, consequently, it is by keeping our eye upon this point, that we shall possess the most ready key to their interpretation.

Before we proceed, however, to the exposition of the modern idealism, we must concentrate in a few lines the chief results of the Kantian philosophy, in order that we may thus keep up the historical connection, and show the process by which the systems that flourish in the present century, have been developed.

According to Kant, there are three great faculties which compose our intellectual nature; sense, understanding, and reason. All the *material* of our knowledge comes to us through the medium of the first, but it comes in a chaotic mass, without form, and void. The faculty which gives shape and distinctness to this material, and which thus forms it into notions, is the understanding. Then, lastly, the reason is ever employed in generalizing our notions, in making them as abstract as possible, and thus in giving to them a systematic unity. From this it follows, that the only true knowledge having objective reality answering to it, is that which lies within the bounds of our sense-perceptions; that all else is merely

*formal*, and, if supposed to be otherwise, must prove delusive and contradictory. It follows, moreover, that, as the bare matter of our notions comes from without, and everything which shapes them into distinct conceptions is communicated by the forms of our own understanding within, therefore all our knowledge of things beyond the mere fact that *they are*, is purely subjective, and, were our understandings differently constituted, might be entirely altered. The real objects we know to be actually present, otherwise all our knowledge would be formal, as in logic; but they can only be *to us* what we feel them. Nothing can ever come to our knowledge at all, except through the medium of the laws of our own subjective faculties; so that, what we see in matter is not its real qualities, but a reflection of the forms of our own understanding. It is to be remembered, also, that when we speak of the *material* of our knowledge coming through the senses, all we are to understand by this material is bare phenomenon; for Kant proceeded to show that the purely rational ideas of matter, of the soul, and of God, are but personifications of our own modes of thinking, and cannot be shown *scientifically* to have any objective reality answering to them; although it is quite conceivable that this *may* be the case, and quite impossible to prove aught to the contrary.\*

Now, in these conclusions there is a twofold element involved; there is, on the one hand, something without, which is independent of our subjective activity, and which exerts a direct influence upon our minds (for Kant assumed as indisputable the veracity of our sense-perceptions); and on the other hand there is the strongest possible tendency to pure subjective idealism; for the element given in sensation was not only regarded as mere phenomenon, but also as having in it no distinctness, no form, no property, nothing, in fact, by which it could be marked, known, or defined, until it was shaped into notions by means of the understanding, and in accordance with its subjective laws. These two points, then, in the Kantian philosophy, have given rise to a double stream of speculation in the more modern metaphysical schools of Germany. Jacobi, on the one side, laid hold of the *realistic* element, and strove to assign it a still higher place amongst the first principles of human knowledge than was allowed by Kant himself; and Herbart carried out the tendency thus commenced by making the real objective fact given in perception (*das faktisch Gegebene*) the very

\* It will be remembered that Kant counteracted the scepticism to which his theoretic philosophy led, respecting morals and natural theology, by the conclusions of his practical philosophy.

foundation stone of his system. On the other side Fichte, developing Kant's subjective and *idealistic* tendency, easily snapped asunder the slender thread by which the objective world retained its hold upon our theoretical belief, and made all existence absolutely synonymous with *thought*. This branch has been since followed up by the still more extraordinary speculations of Schelling and Hegel.\* These six names, then, Kant, Jacobi, Herbart, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, stand at the head of well-nigh all that is original and peculiar in German philosophy; the other writers have merely afforded different phases of the same ideas, or applied them to other objects, or attempted a reconciliation between the different schools above indicated.

As the idealistic side of the Kantian philosophy is, without question, the pre-eminent, it will, perhaps, be most natural to commence with the great branch of metaphysical speculation, which we have regarded as having taken its rise from that source. Jacobi would, doubtless, have claimed the prior notice, chronologically considered; but the element of *faith* which he introduced to supply the deficiency of reason, removes him more properly to the ranks of the mystics; while Herbart, who came much later, is scarcely intelligible, until we know something of the purer idealistic systems against which his whole philosophy was directed. In the present section, therefore, we shall first trace the regular development of the ideal philosophy from the close of the last century to its culminating point as seen in Hegelianism; next, we shall exhibit the method by which Herbart sought to uphold a realistic philosophy in direct opposition to the other prevailing systems; and, lastly, we shall allude to the still more recent manifestations, which speculative philosophy has exhibited on the ever fruitful soil of Germany. The consideration of Jacobi we must, of course, reserve for the chapter on mysticism, where we shall find the faith-element, he introduced, combining with the other rationalistic systems, and thus filling up a very considerable space in the philosophical history of the present century.

The intelligent reader can now start, we trust, with a distinct idea of the position which Kant holds in the road to subjective idealism. The prevailing and most fruitful notion in his philosophy is that of *self*; for, although the idea of a really existing *not-self* in nature is allowed, yet all we know of it is, as it were, a mere

\* On the classification of the Modern German Philosophy, see Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," p. 419, *et seq.*

surface without any characters, which reflects back the subjective forms of our own understanding ; and, although the conception of *God* is also acknowledged, yet, scientifically, it cannot be regarded as anything else than the generalizing power of our own reason personified. Still, with all this, so long as the veracity of our sense-perceptions, and, consequently, the reality of outward phenomena, was accepted as a fact, resting without need of further proof, upon the direct testimony of our consciousness, there was, of course, an *empirical* as well as a *rational* element in his philosophy.

Reinhold, however, perceiving that there were two original elements of consciousness admitted by Kant as the basis of his philosophy, namely, the *forms* of our personal activity on the one side, and the *material* of our thoughts as given in perception on the other, proposed to supply an analysis of consciousness itself, to attain in that way a single instead of a double basis for philosophy, and thus to complete the system which Kant had so skillfully commenced. This proposition of Reinhold, to find the foundation-principle of all philosophy in the depths of our own consciousness, proved in fact the transition-point between the doctrine of Kant and that of Fichte, whose first idea was not by any means to introduce a new theory, but only to show how the Kantian metaphysics, which had been attacked by the scepticism of Schulze and Maimon, might obtain a solid and uniform foundation. To this celebrated author, then, we must now revert.

John Gottlob Fichte was born at Rammenau, in the year 1762 ; became a student at Jena in 1780 ; from 1784 to 1793 was occupied in private tuition ; and then received an appointment as professor of philosophy in Zurich, where he married a relation of the poet Klopstock. After remaining there only one or two sessions, he was invited to a chair in Jena, where he enjoyed a few sessions of happiness, in conjunction with some of the first minds of the age, which were then gathered together at that university. In 1795, he relinquished his post at Jena, and became co-editor with Niethammer of a Philosophical Journal. This office he held till the year 1798, when, in consequence of an article which appeared to savor of atheism, he was frowned upon by the Weimar government, and, consequently, took up his residence in the Prussian states. His arrival in Berlin excited some attention, and his lectures were attended by men of the first rank and ability, until he was induced to leave that place also, by an invitation to the chair



of philosophy at Erlangen. The French war next unsettled his repose, and obliged him to fly successively to Königsberg and Copenhagen, in order to avoid all connection with a nation and an enemy, for whom, in common with every true German, he had the greatest abhorrence. In 1807, he returned to Berlin, and undertook, in connection with many others, who were appointed for that purpose, the organization of the university; in the precincts of which he delivered, during the first winter, his celebrated "Addresses to the German Nation." He remained there occupying some of the most important and responsible stations in the university, until the freedom war broke out in 1812, when he became excited in behalf of his country to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. He was not destined, however, long to take a share in the struggles of his fatherland; for his wife, having contracted fever from her attention to the sick and the wounded, he only witnessed her recovery, himself to fall a victim to the same disease. His death took place on the 12th of January 1814, in the fifty-second year of his age. Such was the eventful life of one of the greatest thinkers which Germany ever produced.

In attempting to explain, connectedly, Fichte's philosophical principles, we must remember, that in early life he had entered fully into that portion of the Kantian metaphysics, which teaches us to regard all the properties of external objects as determined by the laws of our own understanding. According to this, we know everything only as, by virtue of our faculties, we *represent* it to our minds. The forms of our sensational faculty, the categories of the understanding, the conceptions of pure reason—these, in the Kantian philosophy, are the necessary and unalterable ideas under which everything, both in the material and spiritual world, is viewed. For a considerable period Fichte remained faithful to these Kantian doctrines; but after having read the sceptical writings of Schulze and Maimon, he became at length convinced that Kant had not built his system upon a foundation sufficiently deep and immovable. The objective reality of our sense-perceptions, was, on his hypothesis, *taken for granted*, without any reason being assigned for it; so that here was one whole branch of that system resting upon an empirical basis, and therefore, as he supposed, lying out of the region of strict scientific truth. Fichte's object was to find out what we can be said absolutely to *know*, and having discovered this, to erect a system, not of philosophy, but of rigid scientific knowledge, against which no scepticism

could possibly rear an objection. Hence it was that, in place of "*Philosophy*," he assumed the term "*Wissenschaftslehre*," as most designative of his great purpose.

Scientific truth, according to Fichte, is that which, starting from *one* self-evident basis, infers every succeeding position, step by step, with demonstrative certainty.\* But then the question is, where must we start from, in order to be perfectly secure in every succeeding deduction? Not, as Kant did, from the supposition of an objective world standing co-ordinate, and as though it were equally certain with the facts of consciousness; but simply and solely from those facts themselves. All we are immediately conscious of, argues Fichte, are the states and processes of our own thinking self. Our sensations, perceptions, judgments, impressions, ideas, or by whatever other name they are designated, these form the material of all the knowledge which is immediately given us—knowledge which no sceptic, not Hume himself, ever disputed; nay, which cannot be disputed without our performing, in order to do so, one of the very processes, and admitting some of the very conceptions, whose existence we dispute.

*Knowledge*, therefore, that which has about it no element of mere faith, must commence absolutely and solely with my subjective self. Whatever I experience immediately, *i. e.*, whatever forms a part of my own direct consciousness, is surely and certainly known—known in a manner, in which nothing whatever can possibly be, that does not pass through my real mental experience. Suppose, for a moment, that there were an objective world: how could we affirm this to be the case, when everything, that lies without us, can only become known at all by passing through our own consciousness? If it be said, that our inner consciousness is so formed as to give us a perfect representation of the world without, then we may reply, How can you verify this fact? The means of verifying it, if they exist at all, must arise from the capacity of comparing the reality with the representation—a process which implies (what has just been given up) the power of perceiving things out of the consciousness, without any representation whatever. We can only attempt to verify our first representation of things, by making another representation of them; try as we will, therefore, we must, after all, confess that we have an immediate consciousness, and consequently an immediate knowledge, *only* of our subjective states; and that, if anything do lie beyond

\* See his "*Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre*," Preface; also p. 10, *et seq.*

them, we can only come to the knowledge of it through their medium. Such is Fichte's fundamental position.

But it might be urged, again, that our intelligence is so formed, that we are obliged to accept our inner consciousness as a veritable picture of the external world. To this, Fichte rejoins, that the very intelligence which obliges us to do so is purely subjective; it is but the name we give to our own mental constitution; so that, after all, we do not get a step beyond the circle of our own selves. And if, lastly, the opponent should give up all idea of representation, and urge that we are so constituted, that it is absolutely *necessary* to suppose the real existence of material things around us, then our philosopher reiterates the same argument as before, and urges in reply, that we do so only as *necessitated* by our own inward faculties, or the laws of our own subjective reason; so that we find ourselves still confined within the circle of our subjectivity, without the possibility of getting a sure passage into the external world. What we *know* is simply the contents of our own consciousness; if there *is* an objective world, it can only exist to us when it becomes part and parcel of those contents.

Now, in pursuing this line of argument, Fichte did not intend to deny practically the reality of external things; all he intended was to give an exact natural history of the human mind; to show in what its knowledge commences; of what it consists; and within what limits it is confined. In other sciences men may *assume* the objective, and proceed accurately enough on that assumption; but in philosophy, properly so called, (*i. e.* in Wissenschaft,) where nothing is to be assumed, and every point *known*, he considered that a rigid consecutive method did not allow us to go a single step beyond what is to us absolutely real, namely, the facts of our own mental experience. He imagined the mind to be, as it were, an intelligent eye, placed in the central point of our inward consciousness, surveying all that takes place there; and it was from that point of view (the only absolute and scientific one) that he wished to give an account of our moral and intellectual history, detailing the rise, the progress, and all the events of our real inward life, from its commencement to its maturity. Whether the scenes which take place within this subjective circle, betoken any objective existence or not, that was to him a matter of no consequence; well he knew that, if this were the case, it was only just in proportion as the objects could lay aside, as it were, their

objectivity, and transport themselves within the subjective sphere of the mind's vision, that they could be observed and known ; or what is the same thing, that *to us* they could *exist*. The real history of every man, urged Fichte, is the history of his mind, the flow of his conscious existence ; for what are to us woods, mountains, trees, or stars, but names we attach to certain facts of our consciousness ? what are all forms of the material world, but certain visions which have passed through our own minds—sensations which we have inwardly experienced ?

This being the case, the next inquiry is, Are we, in proceeding scientifically, to regard the *supposed* objective reality around us as the *generative principle* of our subjective states ; or are we to consider our subjective states as the generative principle of the supposed objective reality ? Do we experience subjective phenomena (as, *e. g.*, sensations) because there are objective existences around us ? or do we suppose objective existences to exist, because we experience certain subjective phenomena ? Scientifically speaking, there can be no doubt but that to us the subjective is the primitive ; from this we take our start ; on the ground of this we proceed ; and if we believe in an objective world at all, it is only because our subjective states or laws of thought have led us to do so. What is immediately true to us, are our *sensations*, *perceptions*, and *ideas*—it is our reason which *supposes* an external world, in order to account for them. Whatever, therefore, the real fact may be to the eye of the Creator, the only scientific plan we can proceed upon, is to analyze our own consciousness, to regard *self* as the absolute principle, and to view everything else as constructed, so far as we are concerned, by the necessary exertion of its own subjective laws. Man begins by observing the facts of his consciousness ; on the faith of those facts he conceives for himself all the forms of the external world ; in those facts he remains shut up till he leaves the stage of his earthly existence. Philosophy, therefore, must disregard everything else, and *confine itself* simply to this subjective sphere. To it nature is nothing, mind is everything, for nature is only known as imaged in the mind.

In constructing, then, a science upon these principles, we must first look attentively at the consciousness itself in its primitive state. We find, in doing so, that as far back as our recollection goes, sensations, perceptions, representations of various kinds, and in various degrees of intensity, have ever existed there. How



they have come, it is not for us to explain; all we know is, that they are there, apparently in accordance with the original constitution of the active, thinking principle, which we term mind, or self. In some of our mental processes we are conscious of putting forth our own free activity; but in the case now before us—that of our sensations—the mind apparently is not free; on the contrary, it feels itself constrained, opposed, determined. We are *obliged* to have certain feelings, and to possess certain objects in our consciousness; and the only reason we can give for it is, that we are so formed by nature, and that the spontaneous activity of our minds is such as necessarily to produce them. Feeling ourselves, however, thus circumscribed, we imagine that an actual reality out of us exists, from which this resistance proceeds; in other words, we objectify the laws by which our activity is limited, in order to explain the phenomena of that limitation, and call it *matter*.

Let any one, says Fichte, regard the facts of our experience from the subjective point of view we have above explained, and see whether the description of them which is there given, is not literally a true one. The ordinary procedure of philosophers has usually been exactly the reverse. They have first *assumed* an external world, and then from that assumption have explained all the facts of our consciousness which come within the limits of sensation. The true scientific procedure, however, is undoubtedly this: I am conscious of certain feelings, certain representations, certain inward pictures so to say; and in order to account for them, I *infer* the existence of external things. To say *first* that the objects exist, and *then* that our sensations come from them, just reverses the chronological order of the process, and is no other than involving ourselves in a vicious circle, by reasoning first, that our sensations exist because there are objects present to cause them, and then, that real objects must be present, *because* we have the sensations. Two realities cannot be mutually generative of each other; the one must be the antecedent, the other the consequent; and in this case there can be no hesitation in assigning the fact of consciousness as the antecedent, since it is only through it, that we could ever come to have the slightest idea of any objective reality.

The true history of our inner life's experience, then, from the subjective point of view, is the following. The mind is first of all unconsciously active; in this unconscious or spontaneous activity,

we soon find ourselves limited by the laws of our being ; and then, ere we come to the idea of self as the real subject of all these experiences, we throw ourselves entirely into the contemplation of these limitations, objectify them, and term them an external world. After a time, however, the spontaneous action of the mind begins to give way to the reflective ; we become gradually conscious of our own activity ; we recall our thinking self from its absorption in what it regards as an outward world ; we commence reading the contents of our own consciousness *as such* ; and at length find that the mind alone is the sphere of its own operations ; that it is at once subject and object, the absolute starting point, and the sole sphere of all scientific knowledge.

The necessity of certain limitations existing to the mind's activity is seen from the fact, that were it not so, we should lose ourselves in the infinite ; we should never come to a resting point, never have any clear and defined perceptions ; all this, however, is prevented by the original constitution of our being, which keeps us within proper bounds, and stops us at certain limits, which limits we term outward and material reality. This is what Fichte means when he speaks of those "inexplicable absolute limitations," which in his system are to take the place of external things ; he puts the inward conscious reality in the place of what is with other philosophers the outward object ; he puts the perception in place of the thing perceived ; the feeling of resistance or limitation in place of the matter which resists and limits ; in a word, he views everything subjectively from the central point of his own consciousness, describes everything as it appears from thence, and makes that point the pedestal of his whole system.

Let it be remembered, however, that it is only in the theoretical point of view, that we are compelled to this rigid course of reasoning. If we are required to describe what we can positively know, all we can do is to give the history of our consciousness. Whatever has passed there we know to have been, as far as we are concerned, A REALITY ; whatever lies beyond it, can be the object of faith, but not of science. In the practical point of view, however, where we can step from the region of knowledge into that of faith, external things again find their real meaning and importance ; they become then the work-tools of our life's activity, the instruments by which we perform our duty and attain our destiny.\*

\* For a popular view of Fichte's method, similar, but somewhat more detailed than what we have given above, consult Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," chap. vii. For the same

Having given this general description of the nature and spirit of Fichte's subjective idealism, we shall now point out the formal and technical method by which he expressed and systematized these results.

Let it be premised that the *absolute* principle of all philosophy must be found within us, since it is our subjective states alone, which we can know immediately, and which can afford, therefore, a certain ground to start from. But on looking within, all we are conscious of are certain *acts* or *processes*; of the substance of the mind, of pure essential spirit, we know absolutely nothing. The clearest notion, then, which we have of the mind is, that it is the *power of thinking*; the clearest that we have of the consciousness, that it is the point or focus in which all our thoughts unite, and from which they appear to emanate.

In order, therefore, to obtain a starting point for a system of pure science, we must look steadfastly into our own consciousness, and find some act of the mind's own spontaneous production, which can be regarded in every way as axiomatically true: such being found, it would give us the absolute and unconditional principle of all human knowledge.\* This primitive act is none other than the principle of identity (*Satz der Identität*)  $A = A$ , a principle which is unconditionally certain, both as to its matter and its form. No one will dispute the proposition  $A = A$ , when it is not enunciated as though  $A$  implied any particular existence, but simply hypothetically—that if  $A$  is, then it is equal to  $A$ . And yet, in affirming  $A = A$ , I pass a judgment—I think; and in doing so I affirm myself—so that the identity of *the me* is here asserted, and the proposition becomes  $\text{Ego} = \text{Ego}$ . It will be seen at once, that in laying down this as the absolute starting point, Fichte came very near to the foundation principle of Descartes—*Cogito ergo sum*.†

The second absolute principle is the category of *negation*, which may be thus expressed,— $A$  is not  $= A$ . This proposition is conditional as to matter, because it depends upon the previous truth  $A = A$ , but it is unconditional as to form. Viewed as an absolute act of the mind, the equation becomes, The not-me is not  $=$  the me. By the former proposition the me affirmed itself; by this

purpose, Fichte's small treatise, "Ueber den Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre," which was the first idea he gave of his peculiar philosophy, can be read with advantage.

\* "Begriff der Wissenschaftslehre," p. 12, *et seq.*, and "Sonnenklarer Bericht," p. 218.

† "Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre," p. 4, *et seq.*

N.B.—This is the work usually referred to simply as *Wissenschaftslehre*. There are other heads of lectures in his posthumous works, which have the same title.

second act, the me affirms a not-me; that is, it places something before it, which is opposed to self. In other words, in the one case the mind views itself as the absolute subject: *now* it views itself as *object*, forming thus the opposition which is necessary to every act of consciousness.\*

The first of the above propositions is an absolute affirmation—the second an absolute negation. But these two comprise a contradiction in themselves; so that we need a third principle, by which the positive and negative shall be united. Now the union of the positive and negative gives the notion of *limitation*; and consequently the third formula of fundamental philosophy may be thus expressed:—The me affirms itself to be determined by a not-me, and vice versa; a formula which is conditional both in its matter and form.†

Here, then, we have the primitive and absolute processes of the mind, as a pure activity. First, it asserts its own being—an absolute subject:—next, it affirms the existence of something opposed to itself—an absolute object:—lastly, it solves this contradiction, by showing that the positive and negative, the subject and object, limit and determine each other; so that, as the one rises to view, the other disappears. In this hovering between subject and object, all our knowledge is cradled.‡

Having laid down the absolute principles of *all* science, Fichte proceeds to divide the *Wissenschaftslehre* into two parts, the theoretical and the practical. From the foregoing propositions, two principles result. 1. That the me affirms itself to be determined by a not-me; and, 2. That notwithstanding this, the not-me is itself affirmed, and determined by the me. The former of these is the basis of theoretical science, the latter of practical.§

1. Of Theoretical Science. Here we have to view and explain all the phenomena which result from the mind's activity being determined by what appears to be an object. These phenomena are of course the different *relations* which the me holds to the not-me, the subject to its self-affirmed object. Now, if we regard the me and the not-me as *mutually* determining and limiting each other, (which is shown in the third fundamental axiom,) this gives us the category of *action and reaction*.|| Again, if we regard the

\* *Wissenschaftslehre*, p 17, *et seq.*

† *Ibid.* p. 23, *et seq.*

‡ These three principles correspond with Kant's three judgments—Affirmation, negation, and limitation—or thesis, antithesis, and synthesis.

§ See Michelet's "*Geschichte der letzten Sys.*" vol. i. p. 458.

|| *Wissenschaftslehre* p. 58.



me as itself giving its reality to the not-me, and in so far becoming passive to its influence, we have the category of cause and effect—action and suffering.\* Lastly, according as we regard the me as embracing all reality in itself, or admitting other reality besides, we get the notions of substance and accident.† Here, then, we have all the elementary ideas, which go to form the conception of an external object—we have substance and accident, cause and effect, action and reaction. It only remains further to show by what process the object itself is placed clearly before the mind's vision as a concrete reality. To see this it must be clearly kept in memory, that the law of the mind's activity presents the constant phenomenon of the mutual action and reaction of subject and object, of the me and not-me, upon each other. The imagination here comes into play, and pictures, as it were, this process—this action and reaction; holding it up, as though it were a reality, clearly before our own consciousness. The consequence is, that we view the reality which the me takes from itself, and attributes to the not-me, as a veritably existing thing, out of ourselves—the representation which the imagination gives us, being thus objectified. This phenomenon is what we usually term perception, and it only requires the further operation of the understanding, and the judgment, to make the whole process complete, and thus place an external world with all its relations, and created from the subjective laws of the mind's own action, before our view.‡

On the foregoing theory, Fichte considered, that the problem of realism and idealism was fully resolved, inasmuch as the nature of the relation that subsists between the perceiving mind and the object of its perceptions, is at length unfolded. The mind itself is the absolute principle and source of everything; by its original and spontaneous movement it constructs for itself the notion of an external world, and again by its reflective movement it comes back to the perception of its own personal exertion put forth in the whole process. The idea of the objective arises from the self-limitation of our own free activity, and answers to a mental *affection*; the idea of the subjective arises from the direct consciousness of our free activity, and answers to a mental *exertion*. The one serves to develop the notion of the other; without subject, there is no object perceived; without object there is no subject. The me affirms or constructs the not-me, and the not-me, on the other hand, de-

\* Wissenschaftslehre, p. 62, *et seq.*

‡ Wissenschaftslehre, p. 175 to 200.

† Ibid. p. 69.

termines the me ; and consequently the claims of realism and idealism here unite, and the absolute principle of all knowledge is discovered in the centre of our own consciousness. Thus, at length the great fundamental question of philosophy, that which seeks to determine the relation of thought and existence, is settled, because all existence is shown to be synonymous with thought, and the union of the two notions is found in the spontaneous movement of the mind itself.

From these principles, again, Fichte derives a psychological explanation of all the different phenomena of the human mind. If we reflect upon the laws by which our activity is limited, and see them producing, as it were, the obstacle which the me affirms, as opposed to itself, (according to the second fundamental axiom—*Das ich setzt sich ein nicht-ich entgegen*,) the result is termed a feeling or sensation. Again, when the mind loses itself in the object perceived, and thus sees in the me a something which appears altogether the production of the not-me, we term it a *perception*. (By this Fichte explains the phenomena of continuity, of extension, of *time*, and of *space*.) The power by which a sensation is fixed and retained, is that usually termed the *understanding*. The *judgment* is that which unites the free working of the mind (termed imagination) with the understanding, producing a free decision upon the various objects which our understanding creates ; and, lastly, if we overcome all limitations, and view the mind alone in its free all-producing power, we have the highest faculty in man, that denominated *pure reason*.\* To attain this point is not possible in the theoretical, but is seen first in the practical branch of philosophy. The object of the theoretical division of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, therefore, is now accomplished. All the different determinations of the me by the not-me, are explained. The categories of our experimental knowledge are all deduced ; the phenomena of consciousness as engaged in the production of our sensations, perceptions, and judgments, are expounded ; and we are brought to the point where the whole process is to be seen, as the pure production of the mind's own certainty. This leads us to consider,

II. The practical side of Fichte's philosophy. In the theoretical part of the system we have seen that *the me* is determined by a *not-me* ; that there are certain limitations of its own free and intelligent activity, a certain resistance (*Anstoss*) to its own powers of

\* *Wissenschaftslehre*, 203, *et seq.*

conception, which are personified and regarded as external realities. This circumscribing of our freedom, and the consequent necessity of imagining a material world around us, we are unable *theoretically* to account for: all we can say is, that such is the constitution of our consciousness, such the truth of things as given in our own experience, and that we can go no further towards an explanation of the phenomena. In the practical view of the case, however, we can go one step further back; we can show that the limitation of our free intelligence does not arise from any foreign source, but may be deduced from the original, though unconscious activity of the mind itself. All this is deducible out of the fundamental axiom of the practical division of Fichte's system, namely—That the not-me is affirmed as determined by the me.\*

To show this, we must observe that mind, though positively free, though viewed abstractedly only in the light of pure spontaneous activity, whose essence is independence and self-existence, yet is not by any means a vague, aimless, useless activity. It has a purely rational nature, by virtue of which it sets before itself its own aim, the object of its own free activity. To deny this would be to deny the very existence of mind itself: to ask why it is so, would be to ask why truth is truth. The mind, or as Fichte always terms it, *the me*, ever strives after self-development; it seeks to realize fully its own nature, and to bring into actual existence all that lies potentially in its consciousness. This perpetual striving after self-development is the most profound and essential truth of our existence; it is the centre of our activity, the one realistic point around which all that activity revolves, and for which it is all put forth—the uniting point of the absolute, the practical, and the intelligent *self*.†

Here, then, we can show the *reason* of the limitation of our free intelligence. The mind striving after its self-formed aim would proceed onwards in its progress into infinity—it would thus find no point at which to stop, nothing to give a determination to its activity, no means of becoming a cause of something else. Accordingly, to prevent this, it places an obstacle in its own way—it supposes a real objective existence, and in this manner gives definiteness and satisfaction to its own inward practical impulse. From this point we see the utility, yea, the necessity, of supposing a material world around us. Without it we could never realize our duty, or have the material necessary for working out our destiny. “The

\* Wissenschaftslehre, p. 228, *et seq.*

† Wissenschaftslehre, p. 236, *et seq.*

world," says Fichte, "is the sensized material of our practical life, the means by which we place before us, as object, the aim and end of our existence."\*

The whole principle of practical or moral philosophy, then, is easily deduced from the original activity of *the me*, as the absolute, the self-determined existence. The law of our duty, the categorical imperative, as Kant has it, is the original striving of mind after self-development; and since activity is both the essence and the end of our being, everything else is constructed by it in order to subserve this great purpose. So far, therefore, is Fichte from subverting, in his practical philosophy, the complete idealism of his theoretical, that we find idealism here in its purest and most elevated form. It is the practical view of human nature which gives us the reason or ground of the phenomenon which we term *matter*; showing us that the limitations of our intelligence or the obstacles to our activity, (which in his system take the place of objective reality,) are the necessary product of the mind itself in its attempts to accomplish its duty, and at length to realize its final destiny. Having thus, in his "Wissenschaftslehre," laid down the absolute axioms of all science, and then developed them successively in their theoretical and practical aspects, Fichte went boldly forward to show the application of his principles to the other branches of philosophical inquiry. The work to which we have chiefly referred in the preceding sketch, came out in the year 1794. In 1796 appeared his "Naturrecht," in which he has contemplated man in society; and in 1798 his "Sittenlehre," in which we have a complete system of moral philosophy. The latter led him into the province of religion; and *here*, too, he did not shrink from carrying out his scientific principles to their full, and, we may add, their fatal extent.

That such a system of subjective idealism as we have portrayed, could arrive at no conclusion respecting the existence of God, is almost self-evident. If we look out into the universe, what do we see? Simply the reflex of our own activity, the objectified laws of our own being. If we ask after the Creator of the universe, therefore, the answer returned is, that it is created by *ourselves* for the sake of realizing our own self-development. Self being once laid down as the absolute principle of all philosophy, we can never get beyond it so as to affirm the objective reality of aught, either in the material or spiritual world. The only God we can affirm is simply the

\* See Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," chap. viii.



idea of moral order—an idea to which we can only by a logical fallacy append the notion of any essential and personal existence. To have an idea of God, is to limit him, that is, to destroy the very notion of an infinite being; so that, in fact, every precise notion we form of God must be an *idol*. It was from this conclusion that originated the reputation of atheism which Fichte incurred, and which drew down upon him the enmity and opposition of many both of the learned and the great.\*

It will be seen from the above sketch, that the philosophy of Fichte brought to a complete consummation the subjective idealistic tendency. With him the idea of nature, and the idea of God, absolutely vanished: self became the sole existence in the universe, and from its own absolute power and activity everything else, human and divine, was constructed. Notwithstanding the results to which his philosophy led, it is still impossible to read any of his more celebrated writings without being struck with admiration at the powerful eloquence, the unwearied energy of thought, the close and almost pitiless logic, with which he compels you on from one conclusion to another. So far from answering to the idea of a mystic recluse, dreaming away life in the midst of the ethereal and shadowy creations of his own fancy, we venture to affirm that never was there a man more intensely practical; never one more formed to struggle with the stern and bitter sufferings of life; never one who was more able to dispel the shadows and phantoms that deluded the world, and to gaze upon everything in its naked reality; never a mind more clear, more deep, more sternly logical, more solemnly earnest, than was that of Fichte. His orations to the German people are amongst the finest specimens of patriotic enthusiasm, and his conduct was in accordance with the fire of his discourse: his philosophy throughout bore the stamp of a mind inured, to an almost unexampled degree, to abstract thinking, and his life gave a perfect mirror of that philosophy, inasmuch as the independence of his spirit was ever asserting its own native liberty, and ever breaking with unceasing effort through the shackles by which it was confined.†

The fundamental error which Fichte committed in his philosophy, was that of intrenching himself so closely within the circle of

\* These conclusions are found, perhaps most distinctly, in Fichte's treatise, "*Ueber den Grund unseres Glaubens an eine Göttliche Weltordnung*." It should be stated, however, that he rebutted with great energy the charge of atheism, and appeared, indeed, to have started back from the sweeping conclusions to which he was originally led.

† Michelet's "*Geschichte*," vol. i. p. 434.

his consciousness, that it was impossible to find any scientific passage from thence into the objective world. The difference between those operations of the mind which are purely rational or purely imaginative, and those which connect us with the world without, was entirely overlooked. In opposition to this, we might maintain, that consciousness, to which he appealed as the supreme judge, testifies most clearly, that while the notions involved in memory, in judgment, &c., depend simply upon the subjective power of those faculties, our *perceptions* come from a foreign source, and contain an objective element which, in each instance, combines with our subjective self. Fichte, indeed, acknowledges that this is the *phenomenon* presented in perception; he admits that we *seem* to be really conscious of an opposing and limiting force, or in his own words, of a *not-self*; but he attempts to account for this by supposing, that there are certain absolute and inexplicable limits (absolute unerklärliche Schranken) in the very constitution of our own minds, and that the obstacle (Anstoss) to our free activity presented by that which we term the objective world, is self-constituted according to the laws of our intellectual nature. It is just at this critical point, the point which determines the complete subjectivity of his whole system, that Fichte has failed, and become involved in absurdity. He supposes mind to be pure spontaneous activity, and yet he assigns to it certain limits lying within its own nature; in other words, he makes it to be in the very nature of a perfectly free and spontaneous being to have some limit to its freedom—an idea which plainly implies a contradiction in terms.\*

This limitation or obstacle which holds so important a place in the system before us, was, in fact, never satisfactorily explained; and while it presented an insoluble point itself, it prevented the full and final solution of the great problem of ideal philosophy, *viz.* that of identifying thought and existence. The sphere of existence, in Fichte's system, was *supposed* exactly synonymous with the sphere of thought; but the unexplained limitation of the mind's activity implied the real existence of somewhat, altogether beyond the bounds of that consciousness; so that, after all, the conflicting claims of realism and idealism were not satisfied, thought and existence not absolutely identified in their source. Again, the very point which Fichte aimed at, that of reducing all our knowledge to one simple principle, was by no means accomplished. Several of our fundamental ideas are tacitly supposed, from the very begin-

\* Chalybäus, p. 178.

ning of his system. The notions of reality, activity, limitation, &c., are all made use of; and the principles of formal logic are employed, without any attempt to show from whence they are deduced. The *Wissenschaftslehre*, therefore is *not* so fundamental and all-embracing as it would have us to believe: by employing ideas such as those above mentioned, it points us to something more primitive than itself.\*

It might further be objected against Fichte, that he never showed on what ground we are at liberty to conclude, that although the me and the not-me mutually determine each other, and only exist as determined by each other, yet that the *former* is a real existence, and the *latter* a nonentity. If the one proves to be nothing *per se*, who shall say that the other may not prove the same; and who is to prevent the whole system before us from incurring the charge laid against it by Jacobi, of ending in absolute nihilism? Again; how is it to be accounted for, if to each individual the me is the absolute principle of all things, that there are so many absolute principles in the world? as many, in fact, as there are men? The only explanation of this point that can be attempted, is, that it is not the *individual me* that manifests itself in every man, but the *absolute* or *divine me*, of which every man is an image or reflection. If the former hypothesis be taken, then the most absurd system of nihilism, as above indicated, is the result; if the latter, then we have Spinoza's doctrine over again in another form, and this pretended structure of a critical philosophy becomes, in fact, a purely dogmatical system, which, on Fichte's own principles, as an advocate of "*Wissenschaftslehre*," ought to be summarily rejected. That Fichte felt the force of these and similar objections made against his philosophy, is evident from the fact that he relinquished his purely subjective position, and afterwards attempted an entire revision of its fundamental principles. To these later views, therefore, we must now, in conclusion, briefly refer.

In the original form of his metaphysics, Fichte not only banished the idea of matter as a solid impenetrable substance, but allowed no other real existence at all beyond that of a certain subjective activity (*Thätigkeit*), ever working in accordance with a given law or design. Mind was with him simply *action*, and everything else was the product of mind, brought into being by virtue of the original laws, to which it is subjected. What we see in the world of objective

\* This objection is stated very clearly by M. Rémusat, in the Introduction to his "*Rapport*," p. xlii. We may refer our readers to this work as containing one of the best critiques on Fichte which have yet appeared.

existence, was with him simply the reflex of our own faculties; and to be a pure subjective idealist, was to absorb the whole notion of existence in that of *law*, the law of our personal activity. The office of sustaining a system of philosophy on this purely subjective basis, as we have seen, proved no easy task. The inquiry was perpetually urged, What is the ground or essence of the activity, which we term mind? Whence its laws, its limitations, its characteristics? Must there not be something real at the foundation of all these subjective phenomena? In truth, is not something of this nature admitted by the fact of your admitting an original constitution at all, by which the laws of our consciousness are determined? Questions of this description, together with many objections of a theological kind, gradually led Fichte to seek for another absolute principle, more deep and more comprehensive than the former, upon which his philosophy might securely rest.

On reflection he saw, that to deny all *real* existence in our perceptions, does not lead, as he intended it, to a system of pure scientific idealism, but rather, as we have shown, to a system of nihilism. Allow that our free activity represents certain notions to itself, there must be, thought Fichte, something implied in them which *is represented*. Mere knowing can be nothing, unless there is something which is known; mere thinking can be nothing, unless there is something which is thought; and mere perception can be nothing, unless there is something which is perceived. To make our subjective activity in the act of knowing, perceiving, &c., *the absolute*, is to suppose that that the only reality in the universe is a perceiving which perceives nothing, a thinking which thinks nothing, a knowing which knows nothing.

But, then, the question returns, How is it possible to arrive at this real essential existence which is imaged and represented in our own minds? for the moment we attempt to do so scientifically, the old argument against representationism returns, which again seems to shut us up within our own consciousness. Pure subjective idealism, which admits no real existence beyond our own consciousness, is beset with difficulties on the one hand; but the ordinary dualism of philosophers is exposed to equal objections on the other hand. In the former case there is no basis, on which the superstructure can rest, to keep it from sinking into the abyss of nihilism; in the latter case we have no guarantee for the accuracy of the inward representation of the outward reality, and consequently, no means of arriving at absolute knowledge at all. Is it



not possible, then, thought Fichte, to find some *via media*, by which the difficulties of both these extremes could be avoided; by which a foundation might be added to a system of idealism otherwise baseless, and a relief found for the contradictions of dualism. The only resource left was to grant *one absolute existence*, which is the same both in the subject and the object; to assert equally the reality of the me and the not-me, and with it the identity of both; to find a common principle from which all subjective and all objective phenomena spring, and to recognize in this principle an absolute subject-object. This thought, the origination of which is disputed between Fichte and Schelling, was the foundation of the doctrine of identity (*Identitätslehre*); a doctrine which, if it did really spring from the improved philosophy of the former, was only developed, as we shall soon see, to its proper form in the writings of the latter.\*

Under this view of the case the basis of Fichte's philosophy was now completely altered, although he still found a starting-point in *the me*. Instead of regarding *self* as the absolute, by which everything else is constructed, he now admitted an essential reality as the foundation both of self and not-self, and in this way attributed a real existence, although still a spiritual one, to the objective world. The doctrine of identity thus propounded, evidently had a close affinity with the pantheism of Spinoza. The only difference in the two lay here—that, while Spinoza fixed his eye upon the notion of *substance*, until he made it the absolute and infinite essence, of which all things existing are but different modi, Fichte still retained as firm as ever the notion of free and intelligent activity, and regarded infinite reason, or if we will term it so, eternal mind or the Divine idea, as the absolute, all-real, self-existent essence, which manifests itself alike in the subjective and the objective world. According to this view, whatever we experience within ourselves and whatever we see without, are both alike the manifestations of one and the same absolute mind, *i. e.*, of the Deity himself; not merely creations of his power, but actual modifications of his essence. The common idea of matter Fichte never for a moment re-admitted. He still held to his original position, that mind is the sole existence, that the whole universe is a spiritual universe, and to speak of dead lifeless substance, lying as the substratum of what we term material properties, and of the laws of action, which we perceive around us, is going entirely beyond the

\* On this point, see Chalybäus, chap. viii.

region of our actual knowledge, and away from the plain indications of science. Nay, further, he did not allow that the objective world as such, can make any impression whatever upon the subjective self; but, as they are both forms and manifestations of the same Divine idea, he considered that we know, to a certain extent, the nature of what passes without us, from our direct consciousness or intuition of what passes within.

Although Fichte had thus gained a crude and indistinct notion of the doctrine of identity, yet he did not live to develop it in all its clearness, or to apply it to the laws and processes of nature in the world. The phenomena of the physical world, indeed, still constituted a dark and unresolved point in his philosophy; objective existence, as seen in nature, was not yet placed on the same footing with subjective existence, as exhibited in the laws of mind; the identity of the two was not completely thought out; the phenomena of our sensations not fully explained; the absolute unity of thought and existence, as attained in the infinite Being, not completely deduced. To perfect the doctrine of identity, and to apply it more especially to the world of nature, was the merit and the boast of his illustrious successor.

We shall just glance, therefore, in conclusion, at the principal works in which these modified views were expounded. The first work which gave decided indications of dissatisfaction with his original stand-point, was the "*Bestimmung des Menschen*" (Destination of Man), a popular rather than scientific treatise on human knowledge and destiny. The object of it is to show how the mind, when it once begins to philosophize, passes from doubt to science, and from science to a *faith*, which unfolds the real, and gives a solid basis for our confidence in immortality and in God. This was followed up by a little treatise of admirable clearness of thought, entitled, "*Lucid Intelligence offered to the public at large on the peculiar nature of the recent Philosophy*" (1801). No student of Fichte should overlook this brief exposition, which gives in little more than two hundred small pages, the chief points of his whole system in a popular form. But the most important work of this era of Fichte's life was his "*Characteristics of the present Age*" (1806), the main object of which was to develop the philosophy of history. The foundation of his theory on this point is, that *God* ever reveals himself in and through the human consciousness. Every age of the world is preceded by some great idea, and to comprehend any given period aright, we must take a com-

prehensive view of the whole plan of human history as grounded upon ideas. Fichte divides the world's history into five eras. The first is the age, in which reason prevails simply as an *instinct*, or law of nature; the second is the age of *authority*, in which the primitive instinct is retained only by a few of the great men of their time; the third is the age in which authority and reason are both rejected, and universal *corruption* ensues; the fourth is the age of *science*, when reason in its reflective form begins to appear; and the fifth is the age in which reason reigns supreme. The famous "Discourses to the German People" may be regarded as the continuation of the philosophy of history, that, namely, in which the principles there laid down were applied to the interpretations of the state of Europe as it then existed. The little treatise on "The Nature of the Scholar," shows the great part which the man of genius has to play in the development of humanity; and lastly, the "Anweisung zum seligen Leben" (Way to a Blessed Life), winds up the whole system with a kind of lofty and stoical religious mysticism.

We may remark, in fine, that the latter form of Fichte's philosophy was in many respects superior to the former. It not only overcame many of its contradictions, but pointed more decisively to a region in which faith could assure us of the reality of the world, of God, and of an immortality to come; in which the subjective limits of our rational nature could be surpassed, and life be rendered blessed in the confidence of our partaking the Divine nature here, and rising to the fuller participation of it hereafter. Much as the writings of this energetic thinker have lately fallen into neglect in his own country, yet it is unquestionable, that they lie more or less at the basis of all the modern German metaphysics; nor has philosophy since his time, found an advocate so clear, so earnest, so fervidly eloquent, as it found in him.\*

We must now pass on to the consideration of Schelling and his philosophy, by which we shall be brought almost into the midst of the discussions in which Germany is at present involved. Frederick William Joseph Schelling was born in January 1775, at Leonberg in Würtemberg. He studied first at Tübingen, where he formed an acquaintance with Hegel, while both were yet in their early youth. After this he went to Leipsic and Jena, where he devoted himself chiefly to medicine and philosophy, in the latter of which departments he attended the lectures of Fichte. In

\* See an account of Fichte's principal works in the Appendix, Note D.

1798, he succeeded Fichte in the chair of philosophy at Jena, and obtained, by the efforts of his then rising genius, the greatest approbation. In 1803, he accepted the professorship of philosophy at Würzburg, and in 1807 removed to Munich, where, with some few intervals, he resided up to the year 1841. His acceptance of a professorship at Berlin, in that year, excited the greatest attention throughout the philosophical world; without satisfying the expectations, however, which were aroused, he soon relinquished his arduous post, in order that he might end his days (which God grant him) in peace.

Schelling, as we have seen, came upon the stage just at the time when Fichte had carried his subjective philosophy to its very highest pitch. The notion of self had with him absorbed every other; the individual mind was made the absolute generating principle of all existence. By assigning, however, to mind certain limitations lying within its own nature, he unconsciously destroyed its absoluteness, and involved himself in inextricable contradictions. Schelling saw clearly, that the subjective tendency had been carried by him to an extreme; that it was necessary to return to the admission of some actual objective reality; and that the absolute must be found in something beyond the limits of our own individual consciousness. Whether the first notion of the doctrine of identity (that which traces both subject and object to one common source) was given by Fichte or Schelling, we cannot determine: certain it is, that the latter was the first to see the doctrine in all its clearness, and the first who employed it as the groundwork of a complete system of philosophy.

Before we enter more particularly into Schelling's philosophy, it will be useful to take a general view of his literary career, and point out the course which it has followed. This is more necessary, inasmuch as we nowhere find a complete system drawn out in one or more principal works, but rather a continued course of restless speculation, which developed itself in periodical publications. At the age of twenty years, Schelling not only showed an extraordinary talent for philosophical research, but had begun to separate (though but slightly) from the masters under whom he had studied. His first attempt was to elucidate the principle of "the Absolute" or unconditional, on which Fichte had taken his stand. To this era belong his "*Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kriticismus*," and more particularly his treatise "*Vom Ich, als Prinzip der Philosophie*." Starting from the absolute or unconditional, as contain-



ing in itself equally the me and the not-me, the subjective and the objective, he was next attracted to the *objective* element, which, he saw, ought to furnish a complete explication of the laws and processes of nature. Hence originated his Natur-Philosophie, which he first sketched out in his "Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur," carried on still further in the treatise "Von der Welt-seele," and completed in his "Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Natur-philosophie."

Having thus developed the philosophy of nature, Schelling proceeded to the *subjective* element in human knowledge, the result of which was his "System des Transcendentalen Idealismus," which is generally regarded as the masterpiece of his philosophical genius. The objective and subjective side of our knowledge being now completed, Schelling declared himself prepared to bring them to a perfect unity, by furnishing the philosophy of "*the Absolute itself*," and commenced the task of doing so in the "Zeitschrift für Speculative Physik." This task, however, he relinquished, and to the present day its completion remains a promise, with little chance of a performance.

The next literary labor in which Schelling engaged, was the "Neue Zeitschrift für Speculative Physik." In this we have the commencement of a new elaboration of his philosophy, from a somewhat modified point of view. In the former writings he had traced all things in nature and the soul up *to* the absolute; now he sought to show how they may be all deduced *from* the absolute. This movement of his philosophy was carried on in the work entitled "Bruno," and completed in that on "Philosophie und Religion."

Up to this point, Schelling had only elaborated the *negative* side of his philosophy; he had explained the *forms* and *ideas* of things, but had not reached their essence. The remaining works, therefore, are devoted to his *positive* philosophy; that, namely, in which he shows how the divine essence itself, in all its wondrous workings, is revealed immediately to the perception of the human mind. To this period belong his "Untersuchungen über das Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit," his work on Mythology, "Ueber die Gottheiten der Samothrace," his Preface to Cousin's "Fragments," with some other articles, both in a journalistic and independent form.

Several of Schelling's minor works have been omitted in the above sketch, but it may suffice to show to our readers the course which his speculations have followed from first to last.

On entering into an analysis of Schelling's system, we must make

a few preliminary remarks upon the method he has followed in his investigations. With him the great *organ* of philosophy is "intellectual intuition," (intellectuelle Anschauung,) by means of which faculty, he supposes, we have an immediate knowledge of *the absolute*. This intellectual intuition is a kind of higher and spiritual sense, through which we feel the presence of the infinite both within and around us; moreover, it affords us a species of knowledge, which does not involve the relation of subject and object, but enables us to gaze at once by the eye of the mind upon the eternal principle itself, from which both proceed, and in which thought and existence are absolutely identical. Before the time when creation began, we may imagine that an infinite mind, an infinite essence, or an infinite thought (for here all these are one) filled the universe of space. This, then, as the self-existent ONE, must be the only absolute reality: all else can be but a developing of the one original and eternal being; and intellectual intuition is the faculty, by which we rise to the perception of this, the sole ground and realistic basis of all things.\*

The absolute, from the first, contains in itself, potentially, all that it afterwards becomes actually by means of its own self-development; and the great aim of true philosophy is, first, to fix our eye upon this original essence, and then to show how everything is derived from it—that is, how from the absolute subject, or *natura naturans*, is derived the absolute object, or *natura naturata*. This primary essence is not, as Spinoza held, an infinite substance, having the two properties of extension and thought, but an infinite, acting, producing, self-unfolding *mind*—the living soul of the world. Unless we can disentangle ourselves from our unreflective habits of thinking, unless we can look through the veil of surrounding phenomena, unless by this spiritual vision we can realize the presence of the Infinite, the only real and eternal existence, we have not the capacity, said Schelling, to take the very first step into the region of speculative philosophy.†

If, however, we can view all things as the development of the

\* On the *organ* of transcendental philosophy, see "System des Transcendentalen Idealismus." Introduction, sec. 4.

† "Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Natur-philosophie," p. 215, *et seq.* Here the principle of organization itself, the living soul of nature, is described with great clearness and power, as a free and self-unfolding mind—the absolute in its lower potencies. See also the treatise "Von der Welt-seele," introduction, and first part. "Ich nehme die Materie," he says, "weder als etwas unabhängig von der absoluten Einheit Vorhandenes an, noch auch betrachte Ich sie als das blosse Nichts, sondern Ich stimme im Allgemeinen mit jenem Ausspruch des Spinoza überein, der antwortet.—Ich halte vielmehr die Materie für ein Attribut, das die unendliche und ewige Wesenheit in sich ausdrückt."

original and absolute principle of life, reason, or being, then it is evident, conversely, that we may trace the marks of the absolute in everything that exists, and consequently may scan them in the operations of our own minds, as one particular phase of its manifestation. Every mind is the image or reflection of the eternal mind; every individual reason the exemplar of the infinite reason; and, therefore, by gazing inwardly upon the development of our own minds, we may learn the principle or process, by which everything else is developed likewise.\*

Now, in viewing our own consciousness for this purpose, we find that there is combined there the knowing and the known—the subject which perceives, and the object which is perceived. But, then, what is the process by which every such perception takes place, what the law of the mind's own activity? This, observes Schelling, was shown by Kant, when he assigned *time* and *space* as the two forms or categories of sensation. The notion of space arises from the mind's activity going forth, and expanding itself without limit, and in every direction; on the other hand, time is that which bounds and measures space—it is the reflex or attractive force, by which our activity is restrained, and which answers, therefore, to Fichte's "unexplained limitations." The one is a positive force, the other a negative; and what we suppose to be a material existence is the result of these two forces,—the expansive giving the matter of it, the attractive the form.†

Intellectual intuition sees both subject and object, knowing and known *combined* in our own consciousness; it regards them as being but the twofold law by which the soul operates; but ordinary and unphilosophical thinking views them as entirely separate, and regards the one movement, that in which thought is predominant, as the subject, and the other movement, that in which existence is the predominant notion, as the object, thus making a generic distinction, which does not really exist, between the mind within and the world without. Both, in fact, are one and the same essence running exactly parallel to each other; so that, if we begin with the objective side, we can easily deduce from it the subjective; and if we begin with the subjective, we can as easily deduce the objective. Hence, there are two kinds of philosophy, philosophy of nature and philosophy of spirit, both having their

\* Philosophische Schriften. Vom Ich als Prinzip der Phil. sec. 2. Also Transcend. Idealismus, p. 63, *et seq.*

† Von der Welt-seele. Introduction, über das Verhältniss des Realen und Idealen in der Natur.

root in the absolute, and both affording a firm point from which we can take our departure. The office, therefore, of philosophy is, either from intelligence to construct a nature, or from nature to construct an intelligence; thus showing that thought and existence have their ground in the same identical essence.\*

To make the subsequent part of our sketch more intelligible, we must now request the reader to fix his attention *closely* upon the law, or rhythm, by which the absolute, and everything else, as being a manifestation of the absolute, proceeds in its self-development. This law comprehends three movements, which Schelling terms powers, or as we will term them, for distinction's sake, *potencies*. The first is the reflective movement (*Potenz der Reflexion*); this answers to the negative or expansive force, and viewed philosophically is the attempt of the Infinite to embody or represent itself in the Finite. The second movement is that of subsumption (*Potenz der Subsumption*), which is the attempt that the absolute makes, having embodied itself in the Finite, to return to the Infinite. The third movement is simply the union or indifference point of the two former, which Schelling terms the potency of reason (*Potenz der Vernunft*), as being that in which the expansive and attractive, the subjective and objective movements are blended.†

Having thus prepared the way, we can now give a regular and connected sketch of Schelling's "Philosophy of Identity," as it was developed in his earlier writings.

The foundation-stone upon which the whole rests is the absolute and infinite existence (*Seyn*), which forms of itself the whole real essence of the universe, and to the consciousness of which we attain by means of intellectual intuition. This infinite *Being*, containing everything in itself potentially which it can afterwards become actually, strives by the law which we have above indicated after self-development. By the first movement (the potency of reflection) it embodies its own infinite attributes in the Finite. In doing this, it produces finite objects, *i. e.* Finite reflections of

\* "If all knowledge has two poles, which suppose each other, and require each other mutually; these two poles ought to be looked for in all sciences. There ought to be, therefore, two fundamental sciences; and in starting from one of the poles it is impossible to fail of the other. The necessary tendency, therefore, of the science of nature, is, starting from nature to arrive at the sphere of intelligence. The continued efforts which are made in all the sciences to attach the phenomena of nature to a theory, reveal this tendency in a striking manner."—Syst. des Transcend. Ideal. Introd. Sec. I.

† A view of this law of the absolute is given in the "Ideen zu einer Phil. der Natur, and Erster Entwurf;" but more fully in the "Neue Zeitschrift für Spec. Phil." St. II. p. 46, &c.



itself, and thus sees itself objectified in the forms and productions of the material world. This first movement then gives rise to the *philosophy of nature*. The second movement (potence of subsumption) is the regress of the Finite into the Infinite; it is nature, as above constituted, again making itself absolute, and reassuming the form of the Eternal. The result of this movement is *mind*, as existing in man, which is nothing else than nature gradually raised to a state of consciousness, and attempting in that way to return to its infinite form. This gives rise to transcendental idealism, the philosophy of *mind*. The combination of these two movements (*Potenz der Vernunft*) is the reunion of the subject and object in divine reason; it is God, not in his original or potential, but in his unfolded and realized existence, forming the whole universe of mind and Being. This is the proper view of Schelling's pantheism, and is fully unfolded in the philosophy of the absolute.

Having thus seen the absolute dividing itself into object and subject, nature, and spirit, by the original laws of all being, we shall go onwards with these two branches of philosophy, and follow Schelling step by step in the construction of his whole system. That system all turns upon the law or rhythm we have explained.

Just in the same manner as we perceived three potencies in the absolute itself, so also shall we find three potencies in each of the two divisions of philosophy, which have thus originated, namely, in *nature* and in *mind*. These three potencies will again form three subordinate spheres of being, each of which still continues to exhibit the same law, showing two opposite movements and a point of indifference in which they both unite. Schelling terms the movements which come within the philosophy of nature the *real* side of the question, those which come within the philosophy of spirit the *ideal*, both absolutely answering to each other, but the one in the lower state of unconscious existence, the other in the more highly developed state of self-consciousness. Nature and spirit are thus both the emanations of the eternal mind, but the one in a higher potency than the other. To make the matter clear to the eye, and at the same time to furnish an index to our subsequent explanation, we shall here give the outlines of the whole system in the following scheme.\*

\* It should be observed that Schelling has not given any synoptic view of his philosophy as here presented. The annexed scheme is in fact constructed from a general view of all his works combined, and comprehends equally the *Natur-philosophie* and the *Transcendentaler Idealismus*, placing them together so as to form an organic whole. For the general idea of the plan, I am indebted to the work of J. L. Schwartz, "*Schelling's Alte und Neue Philosophie*."

*The Absolute in its undeveloped essence divides itself into*

OBJECT, OR THE REAL SIDE, AND	SUBJECT, OR THE IDEAL SIDE.
<i>First Sphere</i> , (that of Matter,) containing, Potence of Reflection = Expansion. Potence of Subsumption = Attraction. Potence of Reason = Gravity. 1ST. INDIFFERENCE.	<i>First Sphere</i> , (that of Knowing,) containing, Potence of Reflection = Feeling. Potence of Subsumption = Reflection. Potence of Reason = Freedom. 1ST. INDIFFERENCE.
<i>Second Sphere</i> , (that of Dynamics,) containing, Potence of Reflection = Magnetism. Potence of Subsumption = Electricity. Potence of Reason = Galvanism. 2D. INDIFFERENCE.	<i>Second Sphere</i> , (that of Action,) containing, Potence of Reflection = Individuality. Potence of Subsumption = State. Potence of Reason = History. 2D. INDIFFERENCE.
<i>Third Sphere</i> , (that of Organism,) also, union of two other Spheres, containing, Potence of Reflection = Reproduction. Potence of Subsumption = Irritability. Potence of Reason = Sensibility. 3D. INDIFFERENCE.	<i>Third Sphere</i> , (that of art, as seen in the productions of genius.) This, as the absolute indifference of all the other Spheres, is the highest point of man's development; it has no separate potencies, but leads us to the final result of the whole system,—viz :

*The Absolute in its developed state, being the identity of Nature and Spirit, of the Real and Ideal.*

Now, in directing our attention first to the *real* side of the above plan, the development of which gives us the philosophy of nature, we must remember that external nature, according to Schelling, contains the absolute essence *complete*, only viewed predominantly from an objective point of view.

*First sphere.* The first sphere, that of *matter* mechanically considered, is the streaming forth of the infinite into the finite; it is the development of the productive *power* of nature into some actual product; the union of the infinite essence with finite form. Matter is the production of, or rather emanation from, the great eternal *mind*; it is strictly speaking, that mind itself seen in its primary reflective movement, and making itself finite in order to become the object of its own happy contemplation. God saw all he had made—all that came forth from himself, the type of his own power and glory, and behold it was very good.

Matter, however, as being a complete exhibition of the Absolute in one particular aspect, and as forming a universe in itself, must exhibit all the three potencies above indicated. The first of these is repulsion, or the expansive power; the next is attraction, or that by which the expansive or objective tendency is limited, and referred back to the centre from which it sprung. Just as by their centrifugal force the planets individualize themselves in their own separate orbits, and by their centripetal all tend back to one centre, so matter in general by repulsion is individualized, and by attraction tends back again to unity. The indifference of these two forces is *gravity*, that which makes matter what it is, and gives it the appearance of being the dull, lifeless, impenetrable mass which we ordinarily conceive it to be in things around us. The first generic potency, then, of nature, is the union of the repulsive and attractive forces, forming the whole phenomena of the material universe, *statically* considered.\*

*Second sphere.* This being the reflective movement of the real side, as above shown, we now look for the second generic potency, that of subsumption, by which the material world will exhibit a

\* "Erster Entwurf," Introduction, p 57, *et seq.* In his treatise, "Von der Weltseele," p. 47, Schelling explains his theory of matter thus. "The heterogeneity of matter loses itself at length in the idea of an original homogeneity of all the positive principles in the world. Even that original opposition, which *appears* to maintain the dualism of nature, vanishes in this idea. We cannot explain the chief phenomena of nature without such a conflict of opposing principles. But this conflict only exists in the moment of appearing. Each power of nature originates that which is opposed to it. This does not exist *of itself*, but only in the conflict, and it is simply this conflict which gives it a momentary separate existence. So soon as the conflict ceases, it vanishes, inasmuch as it steps back into the sphere of universal identity."

regress movement back from its finite forms towards infinity. This second potence is the principle of *light*. Light is the soul, of which matter is the body ; it is that by which nature gazes upon itself. Nature, accordingly, when viewed in this potence, is no longer seen as dull inert matter, but as replete with perpetual movement and activity. This dynamical sphere of nature's operations, has likewise three movements. The first is *magnetism*, in which the motive power is seen, by means of polarity, dividing itself into two opposite directions, and always acting in a right line. The second is *electricity*, which shows again the unity of the positive and negative poles of the magnet, and acts over surfaces. The third is the chemical process, or galvanism, which is the combination of these two forces, and gives the third dimension to space.\* From the two foregoing spheres—that of matter, and that of light—of statics, and dynamics, the existence of the three realms of nature is explained. Hard unyielding matter is the kingdom in which *weight*, or gravity, is predominant—that in which movement predominates is the air, and the indifference of these is water.

*Third sphere.* Having thus seen nature in its first potence, as attraction and repulsion, giving rise to the phenomena of mechanical matter ;—having seen it also in its second, or dynamical potence, taking the appearance of light, in the forms of magnetism, electricity, and galvanism, we now come to the third potence, that in which the two former are perfectly combined, and in which is shown the whole working of the Absolute towards its great end, in a finite form. There is one great aim after self-development in all nature ; but as in the real or objective side the Absolute is seen individualized, the aim of nature must there result in individual productions, each of which is a little world (a microcosm) in itself. This is realized in organization, or life ; in which matter and light, the maternal and paternal principle, the mechanical and dynamical potencies, are perfectly combined. Every organization is the complete representation or image of the Absolute in a finite form ; it is subject-object exhibited in nature ; and constitutes the highest perfection of physical existence. The three movements of this sphere are, first, reproduction—the embodying of the essential life-principle into new forms ; secondly, irritability—the power of in-

\* Schelling's theory of the Dynamical principles of nature, more especially the method by which he deduces the three dimensions of space from magnetism, electricity, and galvanism respectively, is best seen in the "Zeitschrift für Speculative Physik," vol. ii. part 2. See also Schwartz, p. 54, *et seq.*



dependent and unimpelled movement; and thirdly, sensibility, in which the reproductive and self-moving principles are combined. Here we have followed nature in its different objective spheres, up to its highest development; sensibility forming the point in which mere organized life ends, and spiritual life begins.\*

In giving this rapid sketch of Schelling's philosophy of nature, we have concentrated in a few pages the matter of some two or three volumes. To show how the different processes are deduced one from the other—how in the first sphere the principles of mechanics are developed; how in the second the phenomena of chemical agents are elucidated; how in the third the progress of organized life is traced, from the lowest kind of plant, through all the varieties of vegetable and animal existence to the very highest organization, would take more space than can be here allotted to the subject. We have been anxious to give the *principles*, upon which the whole system proceeds, as clearly as possible, and must refer the student, who would understand it more fully, to the works of Schelling himself, or to the numerous analyses which exist of his philosophy in the German language.

We have followed nature, then, through the successive potencies, in which it appears as matter, light, life. All these unconscious productions are but unsuccessful attempts in nature to raise itself to intelligence; they are exhibitions of mind, as yet in a state of slumber; and when at length we get beyond them into a higher potency, and pass from philosophy of nature into philosophy of mind, we have to do precisely with the same essence, only in another form; and to view precisely the same processes, only raised to the loftier position of self-consciousness.

Leaving, then, the real or objective side of philosophy, we pass on to the ideal or subjective department—that to which the name of *transcendental idealism* has been appended. This work of Schelling answers very closely to Fichte's "Wissenschaftslehre." Like Fichte, he begins by searching after an absolute principle of knowledge, and finds it in the same formula  $A = A$ .† Like Fichte, he divides the whole investigation into the theoretical and the practical aspects of the question. Like Fichte, he proceeds by merging the contradictions which the objective and subjective views originate, in higher and more universal principles, until the

\* Schelling's theory of organized matter is expounded in various of his works—*c. g.* "Erster Entwurf," Introduction; "Zeitschrift für Spec. Phys." vol. ii. part 2; "Von der Welt-seele;" "Ueber den Ursprung des allgemeinen Organismus," p. 179, &c.

† Transcend. Ideal Part I. sec. 1.

whole is reduced, not as with Fichte, to the absolute spontaneity of the me, but to the absolute spontaneity of the universal soul.\* What has before appeared under the form of contraction and expansion—of time and space—now appears under the subjective type of subject and object; the two opposite elements out of which all our knowledge is generated.† We proceed, therefore, with the development of our scheme, as shown on the ideal side of the philosophy of identity.

Mind, as we said, is the second movement of the universal law by which the absolute unfolds itself; it is nature returning from the Finite, in which it had embodied itself, back again to the Infinite; and just as we saw, that on the real side there were three movements of objective nature, so, on the ideal side, we find answering to them three movements of subjective mind. The first sphere is that of *knowledge*, and this corresponds to matter in the objective side, inasmuch as the laws of perception and of thought exactly answer to the real productions of nature, as was already shown to some extent by Kant, and more clearly by Fichte. The second sphere corresponding to the dynamics of nature, is that of *practice*, or mind in its *free activity*. And, lastly, the third sphere in which knowledge and practice are combined, is that of *art*, which exactly answers to the organic power of nature. This affords us three divisions in the science of mind,—the philosophy of intelligence, philosophy of practice, and philosophy of art; the contents of which we shall now portray‡.

*First sphere.* The philosophy of intelligence, being the first or theoretical sphere of the subjective development of the Absolute, must bear upon it the characteristic feature of the first potency, namely, the embodying of the infinite in the finite. In other words, mind, (or the me,) in coming to the distinct knowledge of anything, must have its free activity limited, and this limitation, (or obstacle, as Fichte termed it,) which gives us the idea of an actual objective product, is the infinite activity of the subject in the process of constituting itself *finite*.

In this sphere, again, we shall have three movements as before. The first is *sensation*, in which the mind's activity gives rise to a distinct image, that is placed before it as object of its own contemplation. The second movement is *reflection*, in which the mind is no longer sunk in the contemplation of its own production objec-

\* Transcend. Ideal. Part vi. General Observations.

† Ibid. Introd. sec. 2.

‡ Transcend. Ideal. Introd. sec. 3.

tively viewed, but becomes aware of the *process* by which the consciousness of the moment is produced. The result of this self-conscious process is called a Notion (Begriff), and the process itself is termed Judgment (Urtheil). Judgment is the reference of a particular to a general (as we see, *e. g.* in the proposition, *horse is an animal*;) and in it, therefore, the finite perception, which we attained to in sensation, is carried back again to the infinite essence (the category) to which it belongs. The union of sensation and reflection gives rise to *freedom*, which is the third movement; for by means of reflection, we become conscious that sensations, though apparently constrained, are the products of our own activity.\*

*Second sphere.* The idea of freedom brings us to the second sphere of the subjective side, namely, the philosophy of *practice*. Under the former sphere we have the analysis of the intellectual powers, under this the principles of action; and, as in knowledge, the *me* was seen to be limited, throwing itself into a finite product, so now in action it essays to rise again to the Infinite; for in all moral action Deity itself, in its essential qualities, is manifested. Knowledge shows the essence of the Absolute expressed in a form; action shows the form again returning to the essence. In practical philosophy, as in all the other spheres, we still have three movements. The first is, that in which the active intelligence shows itself operating within a limited circuit, as in a single mind. This is the principle of individuality; not as though the infinite intelligence were something different from the finite, or as though there were an infinite intelligence out of and apart from the finite, but it is merely the absolute in one of its particular moments; just as an individual thought is but a single moment of the whole mind. Each finite reason, then, is but a *thought* of the infinite and eternal reason. Under this head of individuality, Schelling explains all the phenomena connected with volition and personality, deducing the nature of the passions, impulses, and moral feelings, all of which appear before us as springs to our individual action.†

The second movement in this sphere, is that in which the individualized action of the absolute seeks to generalize itself; in which man no longer acts alone as an individual, but, in combination with other men, forming a *state*. Hence arises the philosophy of jurisprudence and political economy. Now, as men, when acting individually,

\* Transcend. Ideal. Part iii., in which the successive steps of theoretical intelligence are developed at length, in the order above indicated.

† Transcend. Ideal. Part iv. prop. 1 and 2, in which the spontaneity of The-Me is exhibited as the principle of human *freedom*.

act under the influence of freedom, so in their political combinations they act from necessity. A country is urged forward in its progress towards civilization, not by any distinct volitions of its own, but by a necessary law of development. Every nation plays its part in the drama of the world, and every one performs its *proper* mission, but it marches on to its destiny, not with design, but by some unknown yet necessary cause.\*

This leads us, accordingly, to the third movement, in which freedom and necessity are completely blended, and that is *history*. History is the absolute combination of the freedom of the individual with the necessary development of the race. Every act of which history is composed is a free act; and yet man, with all his freedom, cannot help contributing to the accomplishment of the destiny of the whole nation and the whole race to which he belongs. History is thus the great mirror, from which the soul of the world is reflected; it is an ever unfolding epic of the Divine intelligence; and in it we see how the eternal mind, which operates in us all, reveals itself successively to view through the medium of our individual freedom.

In history Schelling lays down three great periods. The first was the period of *fate*, when everything appeared absolutely under the influence of a blind and irresistible power. This may be termed the tragic age. The second period is that in which the power of fate reveals itself as a *law of nature*, that coerces everything into a certain plan of development, which it is compelled to subserve. This period commences with the extension of the Roman empire, from which age we can trace the elements that have moulded our modern history down to the present time. The third period will be that in which we no longer speak of fate, nor of the laws of nature, but where we view the whole as a *divine revelation* upon the theatre of the world. This will be the age of Providence.\*

*Third sphere.* Having now considered the two former potencies of the subjective development of the absolute; having seen it first in the sphere of knowledge, causing its activity to assume the appearance of an image or notion, its essence to clothe itself in a finite form; having seen it, secondly, in the sphere of practice, returning to its original mode of existence as a boundless activity or absolute law; we now come to the highest potency of mental ex-

\* Ibid. Part iv. prop. 4, in which it is shown how in the state the human will becomes objective to itself.

† Transcend. Ideal. Part iv. prop. 4. sol. 3.



istence, that of genius, as seen in the production of *art*. In this we find the complete concentration of all that has gone before, whether in the real or the ideal side of our philosophy.

Art, as the union of the two former spheres of the ideal philosophy, must contain in it a blending together both of knowledge and of action, of form and of essence; and this is precisely its great characteristic. Theory and practice are there completely united. Freedom and necessity, which we saw working in the other spheres separately, in this higher sphere work together; for the artist is impelled by an inward inspiration to his labor. Moreover, art being the highest point of the actual development of the absolute, as it rises from the lowest forms of matter to the highest intelligence, must unite in itself both the subjective and the objective; and what, in fact, are the productions of genius but the embodying our ideal creations into actual objective forms? Again, art must show the features both of the finite and the infinite; and accordingly, infinite perfection, the beau-ideal of beauty and sublimity, is shadowed forth by the artist in his own finite productions. Lastly, as nature and mind show the two characteristics, the one of unconsciousness, the other of self-consciousness, so the inspirations of genius are partly conscious and partly spontaneous. And thus the infinite mind having passed through its various forms of objective and unconscious development, as seen in matter, light, and organization, attains to its state of self-consciousness in sensation, reflection, and freedom, and is carried by the practical movement to the highest point of self-realization, where by means of art its subjective or ideal forms become objectified. Here, then, we have the unity or indifference of the real and the ideal, and come, at length, at the end of the process, to a self-produced, or rather a self-developed, *subject-object*.\*

Having completed the two poles of his *Identitätslehre*, Schelling next proposed to show the indifference point itself; that is, to furnish the philosophy of the absolute by an analysis of the *pure reason*. This was commenced, as we before remarked, in the "*Zeitschrift für Speculative Physik*," but not completed. The Hegelians assert that it could not be completed on Schelling's principles, but that the subjective and objective philosophies respectively of Fichte and Schelling, are united and integrated, only by the dialectic process of Hegel.

\* Trans. Ideal. Pt. vi. In this last part the principles of Transcendental Idealism are brought up to their highest point of development. All the rays of Schelling's philosophy meet in the idea of *genius* as in a focus. This it is which links the human to the Divine.

The above sketch, however brief and imperfect, may perhaps suffice to give an idea of the general character of Schelling's original philosophy. The sensation it produced was manifest throughout Germany, and many of the rising philosophers of the day entered eagerly into a system at once so comprehensive and so poetical. Many of Schelling's pupils aided him in the journal which he published as the organ of his views, and some of them exerted a reflex influence upon the master himself, leading him to recast some of his opinions and to expand others. By the time his system as above described was completed, Schelling began to perceive that he had elaborated too much the objective points in his philosophy; and that in the intense view which he had taken of the absolute, he had diminished, nay, almost lost sight of the notion of any finite existence possessing freedom and personality. With him the absolute essence had become everything; and its development was not the free and designed operation of intelligence, but rather a blind impulse working, first unconsciously in nature, and only coming to self-consciousness in mind. On this principle, all difference between God and the universe was entirely lost; his pantheism became as complete as that of Spinoza; and as the absolute was evolved from its lowest forms to the highest, in accordance with the necessary law or rhythm of its being, the whole world, material and mental, became one enormous chain of necessity, to which no idea of free creation could by any possibility be attached.

Accordingly he now began to enter upon another course of philosophy, not intended to contradict the former, but rather to perfect it, by placing the whole question in a new light. Many different treatises were published by him one after the other, before he appeared to have written himself clear as to what his real design was; but at length he came forth with the declaration, that there are two kinds of philosophy, the *positive* and the *negative*; that he had supplied the negative side, in his original system; and that he was now about to complete it, by supplying the positive. The difference between the two, according to Schelling, consists in this, that while the negative philosophy deduces the *idea* (Begriff) of God *as an idea*, the positive supplies his real essential existence. The positive philosophy starts from being, and comes to thought; the negative starts from thought, and seeks (though in vain) to attain to existence.\*

\* The first distinct statement of this new stand-point is found in the "Jahrbücher der Medicin," vol. i. part i. The precise reason why the terms positive and negative are applied to the two aspects of his system, it is not very easy to determine. The prevailing

God, the object of all philosophy, stands to us in two points of view. On the one hand, there is the abstract idea of him, *i. e.* the notion of his attributes, or of *what* he is; on the other hand, there is his being or existence, embodying the truth *that* he is. The negative philosophy begins with a low and crude idea of the absolute, and evolves from it a higher; in this way it proceeds step by step through all the realms of nature and spirit, until it attains the highest *notion* which we can have of Deity; but when it has done all this, it is only the notion of God we have deduced, and not the *existence*. The positive philosophy, then, adds to this idea of God his real existence; much in the same way as in Kant's system we saw that his theoretical philosophy attained a notion of God which appeared simply as a personification of our own faculties, while his practical philosophy, on the other hand, supplied the essential reality.\*

The chief objects, then, of this new or positive philosophy may be stated as follows:—1st. To raise us beyond the pantheistic view, given in the former system, and exhibit the Deity as a free personal supra-mundane being. 2dly. To show the necessity and the process of the creation of the world out of God. 3dly. To explain the relation of man to God, as an independent and yet dependent being. 4thly, and lastly, To unfold the nature and possibility of moral evil. Let us view these four points in succession.

1. In order to rise above the pantheistic point of view, we must distinguish between *the Absolute*, as ground of all things, and *Godhead*, as one particular manifestation of it. The primary form of the Absolute is *will* or *self-action*. It is an absolute power of becoming in reality what it is in the germ. The second form in which it appears is that of *being*; *i. e.* the realization of what its will or power indicated to be possible. But as yet there is no personality, no Deity properly so called. For this we must add the further idea of freedom, which is the power that the Absolute possesses of remaining either in its first or its second potency, as above stated. *In this unity, which contains the three ideas of action, of existence, and of freedom, consists the proper idea of God.* God, before the exist-

idea, however, seems to be that in the negative philosophy, he started (as Fichte did) from an absolute and rational principle of science, and thus evolved only the order of *ideas*: in the positive, on the contrary, he begins with the direct intuition of Deity, as matter of inward experience, and thus gets into the sphere of *reality*.—Consult Preface to Cousin's Fragments, on the *method* of philosophy.

\* This theosophic view Schelling derived in great measure from Jacob Böhme. "Ich schäme mich," he remarks, "des Namens vieler sogenannter Schwärmer nicht, sondern will ihn noch laut bekennen, und mich rühmen von ihnen gelernt zu haben."—"Darlegung des Wahren Verhält." p. 156.



ence of the world, is the undeveloped, impersonal, absolute essence from which all things proceed; it is only *after* this essence is developed, and has passed successively into the three states respectively of action, of objective existence, and of freedom, that he attains personality, and answers to the proper notion of Deity.\*

2. With regard to creation, we can now explain the existence of the world without identifying it with Deity, as is done in the ordinary pantheistic hypothesis. The absolute is the real ground of all things that exist, but the absolute is not yet Deity. That element in it, which passes into the creation and constitutes its essence, is not the whole essence of Deity; it is not that part of it which, peculiarly speaking, makes it divine. The material world, then, is simply one form or potency in which the absolute chooses to exist; in which it freely determines to objectify itself, and consequently is only one step towards the realization of the full conception of Deity, as a Divine Person.†

3. Man is the summit of the creation—he is that part of it in which the absolute sees himself most fully portrayed as the perfect image or type of the infinite reason. In him, objective creation has taken the form of subjectivity; and hence he is said, in contradistinction to everything else, to have been formed *in the image of God*.

*Lastly.* To solve the problem of moral evil, we must keep in mind, that man, though grounded in the absolute, still is not identified with Deity; since the Divine element, namely, the unity of the three potencies of the original essence, is wanting to him. Still, man bears a perfect resemblance to God, and therefore must be *free*, and fully capable of acting, if he choose, against his own destiny. This actually took place, inasmuch as he attempted, like God, *to create*, separating the three potencies which were shadowed forth in him as the image of Deity, and not being able, in doing so, to retain their unity. Hence the will of man was removed from the centre of the Divine will, attempted to act independently, and

\* The theosophic view of the Divine nature as given by Schelling, is confessedly obscure. In his "Denkmal der Schrift von den göttlichen Dingen," he discusses the question at issue between himself and Jacobi; and seeks to vindicate himself from the charge of pantheism. So also in the Preface to Cousin, he combats the notion, that Deity is synonymous with pure being, as involving a pantheistic result; and shows the chief merit of his philosophy to arise from the fact of its having established the idea of a progressive development in the Absolute, from pure being up to personality.—Preface, part iii.

† This theosophic view of nature is given at large in the "Jahrbücher der Medicin." The student of Schelling, however, may see the whole of what is essential in the matter, in the small polemical brochure, entitled, "Darlegung des wahren Verhältnisses der Natur-philosophie zu der verbesserten Fichtischen Lehre." (1806.)



brought confusion and moral obliquity into his nature. Man would become like a God, and by attempting to do so, he lost the very image of God which he did possess.\*

The last attempts which Schelling has made in philosophy have been almost entirely of a theosophic, and, consequently, mystical nature. These may all be included under the title, "Philosophy of Revelation," in which he attempts to explain the rationale of all mythology, and to deduce scientifically the whole doctrine of the Bible concerning the fall of man, and his redemption by Christ. In this portion of his philosophy, the doctrine of the Trinity is explained, on the principle of the three divine potencies, which have been so often employed before: the fall of man is interpreted as being the disuniting of the human will as the type, from the Divine will as the antitype; while the doctrine of redemption is viewed as the reunion of that will to God. The first Adam, the original type of humanity, separated from God, and acted during the ages of this resisted evil as the god of this world, striving after an independent and extra-Divine existence. The second Adam, on the other hand, the type of the new creation, exhibited the return of man to a perfect union with the Divine nature.†

On this principle is explained the whole religious history of the world; that history showing, like everything else, three different phases. From the fall of man to the coming of Christ, the human consciousness was given up to the influence of the powers of nature, being separated from God and devoted to sense. Hence the rise of Polytheism, and the existence of heathen mythology generally. Gradually the identity of these powers with God began to break in upon the mind, and gave the first notion of monotheism, which was completed in Christ, the God-Man. Christ represented the complete reunion of man to God, the return of the finite revolted will to the infinite—a return which is shadowed forth by his perfect obedience. But man is not raised at once to perfect reunion to God; and hence the dispensation of the Spirit,

\* The doctrine of human freedom, the nature of good and evil, and the ground of the existence of the latter, are discussed at some length in a tractate at the end of his "Philosophische Schriften," entitled "Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit."

† Schelling's views on the philosophy of revelation are only known in their more matured form, as delivered in the lecture room. Some idea of them, however, may be gained from his "Philosophie und Religion," and also from the "Lectures on the methods of Academical Study." The eighth lecture is on the Historical Construction of Christianity, where a general view is afforded of the manner in which he understands the nature of the Christian doctrines.

as that in which the reunion is completed by the constant impulse of a Divine power.\*

Even in the development of Christianity itself, Schelling finds the same threefold movement which runs so universally through his whole system. The first movement is seen in the Catholic Church, the religion of Peter, objective in its whole aspect; the second in Protestantism, the religion of Paul, appealing to man's subjective consciousness; the third is the religion of John—the union of both in love. The first and second are now passing away, and the next great form of Christianity will be that in which love will conquer all in the perfect union of the objective religion of the Catholic, with the subjective piety of the Protestant.†

It is now easy to see the vast comprehensiveness of Schelling's philosophy *as a whole*. It begins by advocating a kind of Divine intuition, by which we gaze upon the realistic *ground or basis* of all the phenomena, both of mind and matter. From this it goes on to construct, by means of an absolute and *a priori* law, the whole phenomenal universe, deriving it from the self-unfolding of the Absolute. One region of existence after another yields, as by a magic spell, to the bidding of this law, and confesses its secret unveiled. Matter, with all its dull inertia, puts on the garb of contending powers, and shows itself to be the objective reflection of the Absolute itself; those subtle agencies which we term magnetism, electricity, galvanism, light, and heat, each owns itself to be but one pulsation in the self-developing process of the universal mind; and even the phenomena of organized life are still but the complete objectifying of the absolute, each animal nature being a perfected type of the eternal nature itself. From the philosophy of nature, Schelling passes in one unbroken chain of argument, without a chasm between, to the philosophy of spirit. The same great law of the absolute solves the mysteries of sensation, of intelligence, and of human freedom; from thence it proceeds to explain the phenomena of man as an individual agent; of man in his connection with society; and, lastly, of man as he has developed his being upon the broad page of history. Finally, it enters into the mazy regions of human genius and art, and finds in them

\* This historical view of mankind from the religious stand-point is given in the tractate "Ueber die Gottheiten der Samothrace."

† In 1841, Schelling opened his lectures at Berlin, and excited the hope that the long expected completion of his Philosophy would be accomplished. His speedy retirement, however, rendered this hope delusive. The only thing that has come from his pen since that time is a preface to the posthumous works of Steffens. (1846.) This, however, is almost entirely occupied with remarks upon the religious aspect of the times, and the "church of the future."

the crown and the summit of the whole process—the highest expression of the Deity in the world.

Here it might be supposed, that the author would have found his goal, and having constructed the universe out of almost nothing, have at length enjoyed his Sabbath in peace. But, instead of this, we find that the work is only half-done ; he has developed the *law* of the universe, but not explained the *substance* ; he has exhibited the *form*, now he must go to the matter ; he has analyzed the full *idea* of God, and now he must make manifest his *existence*. Upon this, with unwearied wings, he begins another flight—pantheism is left behind, and the real Triune Jehovah is placed before us in all the plenitude of a Divine personality. Next, the whole nature of the dependent creation is developed, the procedure of the material universe from the absolute expounded, and the mysteries of existence, which had been hidden before in thick darkness, made irradiant with light and intelligence. The destiny of man then comes upon the stage. To show this, we have the origin of moral evil discussed ; and the question, so long tossed upon the billows of controversy, forever set at rest. The door being thus open into the region of Christian theology, the philosopher boldly enters in, to grapple with the great ideas which we there met with. The law, which has unveiled the mysteries of nature and the soul, we may be sure does not fail in explaining the whole rationale of Christian faith. The great doctrines of revelation—the fall of man—the theory of redemption—the effusion of the Spirit,—all are converted from objects of faith to objects of science ; all flow, as by natural consequence, from the great rhythm of existence ; nay, the controversies of the Church themselves are settled, and the repose of the world announced in the predominance of the doctrines of the beloved apostle over the equally partial views, both of the Protestant and the Catholic. Such, and far more sweeping than we have represented it, is the philosophical system by which the name of Schelling is destined to go down the stream of time to the latest posterity.

To give any elaborate critique upon Schelling's philosophy, we imagine is in this country quite unnecessary, inasmuch as it would be arguing about a system, which very few as yet understand, and perhaps no one believes in. We shall only offer one or two reflections upon some of the main positions which almost necessarily suggest themselves. First of all, where is our guarantee for the validity of the intellectual-intuition principle, upon which the

whole truth of the system rests, and without which, as Schelling acknowledges, no one can take one single step into his philosophy? Respecting our knowledge of the Absolute, there are in fact no less than three hypotheses in vogue. The first is, that the knowledge of it is altogether impossible, there being no higher faculty than the understanding, and that being cognizant simply of relative and finite phenomena. The next hypothesis maintains, that we have a faculty superior to the understanding, namely, the reason; by which we gain an idea of the absolute as the primary existence in which all finite things are grounded. The third hypothesis is, that of intellectual intuition, by which, as Schelling imagines, we are not only cognizant of the absolute, but have an insight also into the very laws of its development in creation.

Now Schelling fully admits that the Absolute cannot be known by our ordinary intellectual faculties; in other words, that the actual essence of things cannot be attained to simply by our *understanding*. Instead of contenting himself, however, with the faculty of *reason*, as the revealer of absolute existence, he has ventured to run into an altogether wild hypothesis, and under the fiction of intellectual intuition, has pretended to unfold, *a priori*, all the secrets of nature, as being various modi of the Divine existence; in a word, to reproduce in our own consciousness Deity itself. We cannot but think that Schelling has far too gratuitously taken for granted, both the reality of the process, which he terms intellectual intuition, and the reality of the product; especially as he professes to erect a scientific system, having self-evident axioms at its basis. If his doctrine of identity means anything, it means that thought and being are essentially one; that the process of thinking is virtually the same as the process of creating; that in constructing the universe by logical deduction, we do virtually the same thing as Deity accomplishes in developing himself into all the forms and regions of creation; that every man's reason, therefore, is really God: in fine, that Deity is the whole sum of consciousness immanent in the world. "This doctrine," says M. Willm, in his Memoir to the French Academy, "is founded—

"1. Upon an illusion. For it takes the process of ordinary generalization for an absolute law of reason; and erects the principle at which generalization stops, into the real and essential principle of things themselves.

"2. Upon a paralogism. For it confounds the order of knowledge with the order of existence.



"3. Upon an exaggeration. For it exaggerates the harmony which exists, or which we naturally affirm between our intelligence and reality, by making it an *identity*, and attributing to reason so absolute an authority, that everything must be as it thinks, from the moment that it thinks it.

"4. Upon an hypothesis. For it is a gratuitous supposition to place all truth in the reason, and thus to equal reason with God."\*

To be convinced that Schelling's axioms are not the soundest, we have only to look next to some of the actual conclusions of his philosophy, and consider whether they be not in the highest degree unsatisfactory. As an example of this, we imagine, that his original system of identity, which makes the whole phenomena of the universe one chain of necessary development, is entirely inconsistent with the facts of physical and moral evil; and equally so with the conscious freedom of man as a moral agent. Again; the view maintained by Schelling respecting Deity, as coming gradually to self-consciousness, and realizing himself only in man, is utterly inconsistent with the perfections of God, as displayed in the design of the universe, and felt in the holier emotions of man's religious nature. Further; the result of the system, as a theory of natural philosophy, by no means answers to the expectations it excites. One would think, that if the very laws of material existence were laid bare, there could be no further need of experimental investigations. What then, is the fact?—within the bounds of experimental philosophy not an idea is introduced, which can bear any other title than that of pure hypothesis; while the *rough* path of induction must still be beaten as diligently, as though Schelling's great *a priori* discoveries had never dawned upon the world. If we *are* to have a purely rational philosophy at all, which shall satisfy the phenomena of the universe, and explain the whole experience of the human consciousness, it must rest upon a far surer foundation than that which Schelling has laid, and answer far more perfectly to the external and internal facts, which come before our daily observation. The day, we imagine, is far distant, before we shall have to welcome the development of any great physical laws from one who entirely sets at nought the whole logic of induction.

With regard to Schelling's Theosophy, we can hardly view it as meriting the title of philosophy at all, in any true or proper sense; indeed, we believe it is very generally rejected in Germany, even

\* Rémusat "De la Philosophie Allemande," p. 127.

by those who had been warm admirers of his original system. With these obvious objections, however, we must admit, that, as an instance of bold generalization, of fertile fancy, of reasoning ingenuity, abounding at the same time in original views on many topics, and exhibiting a most extensive acquaintance with almost every branch of human knowledge, the philosophy of Schelling exhibits a monument of genius, which, in the same department, has been seldom equalled, and perhaps never exceeded, in the world.\*

Fichte and Schelling represent the two opposite sides of the modern German idealism; the one starting from the subjective principle, the other from the objective—the one regarding self, the other the infinite and eternal mind, the soul of the world, as the Absolute. HEGEL, to whom we must now turn our attention, has passed beyond the region both of the one and the other, and attained to the elevation of what is usually termed *absolute idealism*. Fichte supposed that there is a real subjective existence, in whose nature reside those limitations, by which he has accounted for the phenomena of the outward world; and Schelling maintained an original, absolute, living *essence*, containing within itself the laws of its own self-development. Hegel has first resolved everything into a *process* of thought, and claimed to reach the point at which all speculative philosophy aims—that in which thought and existence perfectly coincide.

George William Frederick Hegel was born at Stuttgard, in the year 1770. At the age of seventeen he went to the university of Tübingen, where he devoted himself to the study of theology, and, in the philosophical department, attended the same lectures with Schelling. After having taken his degree, and having occupied some years as a private tutor, he went to Jena in the year 1801, where he began his lectures as a professor, with an auditory of *four* students. The next sixteen years of his life were spent, partly as a professor, partly as rector of a gymnasium, and partly as an editor and author. At length, in the year 1818, he was called to Berlin, where he lectured with great success till his death, which took place November 14, 1831.

Hegel began his philosophical career as a firm partisan of Schelling; and when he first ventured beyond the pale of his authority, the aim was rather to give system and unity to Schelling's doctrines, than to advance any altogether new ideas. Schelling, as

\* See Note G. Appendix.

we have sufficiently seen, was anything but systematic in his philosophical writings; in continuing to pour forth the productions of his inventive genius, through the medium of his journals, he seemed to aim more at putting his thoughts in different points of view, than at building up the regular framework of a scientific superstructure. Hegel, with less invention, possessed greater logical acumen and far more method than his contemporary; and to this mainly is owing the great extent to which his school has now spread itself throughout Germany.\*

The entrance into philosophy, according to Schelling, was by the door of intellectual intuition, a faculty by which we were supposed to gaze immediately upon the absolute, as we gaze by ordinary sensation upon the forms of the material world. Hegel considered this principle to be unphilosophical, and strove to do away with the necessity of a faculty which might be so easily abused, and would so naturally open the door (as was actually the case) into the regions of mysticism. With this object in view, he sought to construct a *purely logical system*, where there should be no inexplicable phenomena remaining—where no real essence, either subjective or objective, should be admitted, that was not fully sublimated into thought, and that might not form indeed a logical part of the very process of philosophy itself.

With Schelling, there was a primary essence in the absolute, *previous* to its development, and which therefore did not originate in the developing process; in more technical language, there was an ( $x$ ) which remained to the last unresolved in his philosophy. Instead of beginning with *zero*, and explaining *all* existence, he began with a realistic point—a certain absolute power or law, perceived through the medium of intellectual intuition, and made this the basis of everything else. Beyond the region of thought there lay, as he conceived, the region of real existence, containing in it the principle of its own self-unfolding. With Hegel, however, the case was different: he allowed of no original essence whatever, which was not identical with thought, and which was not completely worked up into his philosophical process. The  $x$  was with him entirely resolved; for, beginning with *nothing*, he showed with logical precision how everything had regularly proceeded from it.

\* Hegel himself says in a letter to his friend Van Ghert:—"Das, worauf, bei allem philosophiren, und jetzt mehrals sonst, das Hauptgewicht zu legen ist, ist freilich die *Methode des nothwendigen zusammenhangs*, des Uebergehens einer Form in die Andere." —Vermischte Schriften, vol. ii. page 479.

Another point of difference between these two great philosophers lies here. Schelling's *intuition* was of such a nature, that the law of the universe (the process of objectifying and again subjectifying) was learned by *experience*. The rhythm of all existence was supposed by him to be cognizable at the same time by the inward experience of the subjective self, in the outward operations of nature, and likewise in the progressive course of the world's history. Hegel's philosophy, on the contrary, is pure rationalism, from the very first step to the last; it results from resigning oneself entirely to the *laws of thought*, as seen in speculative reasoning, and regards the self-development of that thought as being the true revelation of the Absolute, that is, of God. Thoughts are, with him, the only concrete realities; and logic, as being a true description of their processes, is at the same time a true description of the laws of the universe. With other philosophers, logic had been merely a formal science; but although its dignity had been much raised by Kant, as also by Fichte and Schelling, yet it was reserved for Hegel to deny altogether its formal character, to make it a *real* branch of metaphysics, and to admit it as a part of the process by which the whole universe of things is constructed. Not only (as in the philosophy of Schelling) is the method of logic regarded equally with the phenomena of nature as a manifestation of the Absolute, *but it is a part of the very process in which the absolute itself consists*. With these principles, it is easy to see how significantly the Hegelian philosophy has been denominated a system of *absolute idealism*.

We see here, in fact, the perfect culmination of the idealistic method. Kant admitted a double principle as the basis of his philosophy; the subjective *forms* of the understanding uniting with an empirical element, in order to give rise to real knowledge. Fichte brought the question of realism and idealism to a crisis. Whatever we know of a certainty, he affirmed, must be the act of our own consciousness. Philosophy, therefore, must take its stand upon this one subjective principle, and deduce all knowledge, as a spider spins its web, from the laws of the inward self. Schelling perceived that if we take our stand here, one of two things must follow; either we must admit the *me* to be the absolute generating principle of all things, so that the world is but the shadow projected by its own laws, (a result which ends virtually in nihilism,) or allowing the two terms of subject and object to have a distinct existence, we fail of a single and absolute basis for human knowl-



edge, and return to the old disputes between the realist, the idealist, and the sceptic. To relieve this difficulty, he affirmed the fundamental unity or identity of subject and object, regarding them as the two poles of existence—separate in their manifestations, but the one infallibly leading to the other. Schelling, it is known, made several attempts to develop the *unity* of his system, and furnish the philosophy of the absolute, but never fully succeeded. The poles ever persisted in remaining apart, the indifference point being unfound. At this point, Hegel came forward with the assertion that subject and object, thought and existence, are *absolutely one*—and that the only actual reality is that which results from their mutual *relation*. Take any material object as an illustration. Fichte would say, it is a result of my inward activity. Schelling would contend that the outward fact and inward perception are both real, but both the manifestation of the absolute essence in different stages of its development. Hegel says no—the outward thing is nothing, the inward perception is nothing, for neither could exist alone; the only reality is the *relation*, or rather the synthesis of the two, which accordingly shows us that the essence or nature of being itself consists in the co-existence of two opposites. Accordingly, the ordinary conception which men have formed of things, is completely reversed. We generally consider that an individual object, say a man or a horse, is a *reality*, and that it is the mind which forms the universal idea for its own convenience. Hegel, on the other hand, affirms, that it is the universal and particular ideas, the genus and species put together, which actually create the individual. *Ideas*, therefore, arising as they do from the union of two opposites, are the *concrete realities* of Hegel's philosophy; and the process of the evolution of ideas in the human mind is, at the same time, the process of all existence—the Absolute—God. On this ground it is, that logic is the necessary basis of every system of *absolute idealism*.\*

Philosophy begins, then, on the Hegelian principle, by our gaining a clear conception of the laws of thought; those laws by which the knowledge of *anything whatever* is arrived at. In attempting to observe these laws, we soon discover that the process of knowing implies a threefold movement. *First* of all, our consciousness exists in a condition in which it is *one with the object*. Pure sensation (as is generally admitted) would never give us the knowledge

\* The student of Hegel may consult, on this point Dr. Ott's work, entitled "Hegel, et la Philosophie Allemande," chap. ii., where many illustrations of the above principles will be found.

of an external world; all that it affords us is a *bare feeling*; so that the primary step in the attainment of the knowledge of any object, must be the state in which there is a complete blending of subject and object (simple apprehension). *Secondly*, instead of remaining in this state of consciousness, we soon objectify it; sensation becomes perception, and we refer our feeling to some real outward existence as the cause. The faculty by which this separation between subject and object is effected, is the understanding (*Verstand*), answering to judgment in the ordinary division of the scholastic logic. The *third* process is that in which our consciousness again returns to complete union with the object, even whilst the object remains before us in all its clearness. In this last movement, we perceive the object *as a product, or process of our own minds*: while, therefore, it is, as an outward reality, destroyed, (*aufgehoben*,) yet as a process of our own consciousness it is preserved; or, in the words of the author, the object is *sublatum*, the process is *servatum*. As the former movement was the effect of the understanding, so this is of the reason (*Vernunft*).

In this process, then, which we find to be uniformly followed, when we attain the knowledge of anything, we see the law, or the rhythm of all nature, and all existence. Take any object whatever, and ask how it becomes to us a real existing idea or thing (for with Hegel those two are the same). Philosophers ordinarily say, that when we have a perception there is implied the mind or subject that perceives on the one side, and the object which is perceived on the other, the two communicating by some unknown process. The pure subjective idealist, it is true, denies the reality of the object, and regards it as a production of the subject; but Schelling had exploded this notion, and introduced the doctrine of identity, according to which we must admit a real subject and a real object, but must regard them as two corresponding manifestations of the same absolute existence. Hegel, however, now goes one step further in his analysis. He says, that there is neither subject nor object separately considered, but that they both owe their existence and reality to each other. The only real existence, then, is *the relation*; the whole universe is a universe of relations; subject and object, which appear contradictory to each other, are really one—not one in the sense of Schelling, as being opposite poles of the same absolute existence, but one, inasmuch as their relation forms the very idea, or the very thing itself.

This procedure, then, by which everything comes into being, is

the very soul and essence of life, of nature, of the absolute; and Deity, which was in the other systems an original and self-existent reality, is now a *process* or movement ever unfolding itself, but never unfolded. God only realizes himself, in fact, in the progress of the human consciousness; and the process by which this realization is effected, is absolutely synonymous with himself. In a word, the dialectic process is Hegel's method; the dialectic process is his Deity: the dialectic process is everything: all nature, all mind, all history, all religion, are but pulsations of this movement, and God himself is but the same law taken absolutely in its whole comprehension. In the threefold rhythm of all existence, as given by Hegel, there is a manifest affinity with the three potencies of Schelling; but it was Hegel alone who ventured to make a universe of pure relations, and to raise the process, the very method of his philosophy, to the dignity of being itself the *absolute idea* = God.

With these preliminary observations we must now proceed to look a little closer into the *interior* of the system. The point on which we must stand, in order to take a comprehensive view over the whole range of Hegel's philosophy, is that of the *absolute idea*. The Absolute is with him not the infinite *substance*, as with Spinoza, nor the infinite *subject*, as with Fichte, nor the infinite *mind*, as with Schelling; it is a perpetual *process*, an eternal thinking, without beginning and without end. This process of thought, universally considered, is identical with the logical evolution of ideas in the human mind. The law of evolution may be easily grasped. Let us imagine that we want to develop some idea, and gain the fullest possible conception of it, how do we proceed? We find on reflection that the idea divides itself into two opposites, the one of which is the negation of the other; so that the idea hangs, as it were, in the balance between the two. Here, however, the process does not stop. This negation is itself met by another negation, and thus the idea with which we started is restored, only enriched by the very process we have described. The same process is again repeated; at each turn the idea is evolved to a higher degree; and thus it proceeds onwards until it reaches the absolute idea itself.

Now this law is seen on a vast scale in the whole universe of thought, with which philosophy has to do. Here, as in our own minds, we recognize a threefold movement; that movement expressing the innermost nature of all things. The first step is the

infinite idea in itself (*Idee in sich*). The second is the idea in its objective form, or in its differentiation (*Idee in ihrem anders-seyn*). The third is the idea in its regress. These movements, viewed in connection with the process of thinking in which the absolute consists, and in which they are perfectly represented, give us, 1st, bare thought (*Denken an sich*), 2dly, thought externalizing itself = nature, and, 3dly, thought returning to itself = mind. Accordingly, philosophy has three corresponding divisions:—logic, philosophy of nature, and philosophy of spirit. The first is the region of bare thinking, the second is the region of thought in its objective forms, and the third is the region of thought in its reflective movement in the soul of man.\* The whole object of philosophy, therefore, is to develop existence from its most empty and abstract form up through logic, nature, and mind, to its highest and richest elevation as attained in the human consciousness. In this we shall find the same process perpetually repeating itself, and gaining something fresh at every pulsation, until it arrives at its highest perfection.† We begin, then, with—

### LOGIC.

This is the region of abstract thought, in which the absolute appears in its first and most undeveloped form. Logic, as being the province of *Idee an sich*, is intended to show the subjective processes of thought; to point out the method by which, from the most empty of all our notions, we rise gradually to the most rich and full.‡ To explain the true process of logical thinking we must observe, that all knowledge consists in a separation or distinguishing of one thing from another. In every thought there are two parts, which stand opposed; both of which are absolutely necessary to give it a clear and actual meaning. It is the same whether we view thought in the form of sensation, or of perception, or of reflection; in every instance, there must be something separated, defined, distinguished, or placed in opposition to something else. We have no notion, *e. g.*, of a finite without an infinite; no idea of

\* For a brief exhibition of the idea and division of philosophy, the student may consult the introduction of Hegel's "Logic."—N.B. The logic as given in the "Encyclopædie," is shorter and clearer than the original edition. The references accordingly will be given to this.

† Previous to "Logic," Hegel wrote the "*Phänomenologie des Geistes*." This he used to term his Voyage of Discovery. It is considered the most obscure of his writings.

‡ Die Logik ist die Wissenschaft der reinen Idee, das ist der Idee im abstrakten Elemente des Denkens. Logik, p. 28.



cause without effect ; no idea of subjective without objective. So also in nature there could be no north pole without a south, and no idea of material substance without immaterial.

This being the case, it is not possible for any notion to exist as an *absolute unity* : it must, in every instance, consist of two sides, a positive and a negative ; and to complete it, these two sides must be combined so as to form one perfect idea. This is called by Hegel the doctrine of contradiction, (*Widerspruch*,) which simply means, that in every idea we form, there must be *two* things opposed and distinguished, in order to afford us a clear conception and a definite meaning. In this doctrine of contradiction, or rather we would term it, of opposition, Hegel finds the rhythm of the whole logical process, the two opposites answering to the two former movements of the dialectic process above described, and the union of these two in *one idea*, corresponding with the third or highest movement of the same. Logic, accordingly, falls into three parts :

- I. The doctrine of Being, or thought in its *immediacy*.
- II. The doctrine of Essence, or thought in its communication.
- III. The doctrine of Notion, or thought in its regress, in which it forms a complete idea in itself.\*

Now if the problem were placed before us, to trace the existence of all things from their very first coming into being to the attainment of their present form, we should have (beginning with things as they now are) to follow them *backwards*, until we came to *nothing*, and there we should find the starting-point of the process of creation. In like manner, when we attempt to analyze the development of *thought* (which with Hegel is identical with existence), we must seize the very emptiest, most abstract, most meaningless notion we can find, and from that deduce all the rest in regular course by the process already laid down. This primary and most abstract of all notions is that of *being*, (*seyn*,) and forms accordingly the first division of Hegel's logic.

*First Division.* Doctrine of Being.—In asking how a thing can *begin to be*, we require to see its transition from *Nothing* into *Being*. Without the idea of nothing, we could never have that of being, and *vice versa* ; so that the two stand to one another as opposites, and both together combine to form a complete notion, viz., that of bare production, or the *becoming* (*werden*), of something out of nothing. This, then, is the first step in philosophy,

\* *Logik*, p. 161.

the primary pulsation of the dialectic process. In it being and nothing stand as the poles ; and the conjunction of them forms the notion of *existence*. In these three (*sein, nichts, werden*), we see the type or symbol of all thought, showing us, that for every complete idea there must be the combination of two opposites. Neither being nor nothing can exist as a reality of itself ; each is but the opposite pole of the other, and it is in their indifference that the act of coming into existence first appears. Hence the meaning of the extraordinary equation that stands at the threshold of Hegel's philosophy, *Sein = Nichts* ; and hence, the first conclusion, that the notions of being and nothing combined, form that of existence. This may appear clearer to the German scholar, if we say in Hegel's language, that *Sein* and *Nichts* form *Daseyn*.\*

Now, the same process goes over again. *Daseyn* gives rise to a twofold movement, by which a still higher point in the scale of being is attained. An existence may be viewed in relation to itself, or in relation to the things around it ; it may be existence *an sich*, or existence *für andre*. Here then we have another opposition ; an existence can only be *this* because it is not *that*.† *This* and *that* taken alone would be absolutely meaningless, the one must limit or bound off the other. Existence alone would only give a general and undefined idea ; to have the notion of a distinct existence, *a reality*, there must be the negation as well as the affirmation of Being. A rose, for example, is a rose only because it is *not* a lily, or anything else—blue is blue, because it is not green. So, *universally*, the affirmation of any real thing implies in it the negation of a certain amount of attributes. Here, then, we have the category of *Quality*, that is *Being*, determined and limited by a negation ; the steps through which we have arrived at it being *Seyn, Daseyn, Für-sich-seyn*. This category clearly shows us how we come to the notions of finite and infinite. A real something (*etwas*) is distinguished from all other things, by its being limited or bounded off : destroy those limitations, and it flows back into infinity. Thus the notions of finite and infinite are both *per se* incomplete ; the one is necessary to the other, and both arise from that movement of logical thinking by which we rise from the bare notion of being, to that of some particular existence.‡

The three ideas we have just deduced, falling under the category of quality, all point to the *inner* nature of things, and not to

\* *Logik*, p. 165—179.

† There is here a play upon the German expression for existence, *Daseyn*.

‡ *Logik*, p. 180, *et seq.*

their outward form. The next category in the doctrine of bare existence (Seyn) is that of *quantity*. Under this are explained the notion of continued size and divisible size ; of pure quantity and of a particular quantity ; these two united forming the notion of degree (Grad). Degree, then, as implying a quantity joined to a quality, gives the idea of measure (Mass), or the relation of one quantity to another, and thus completes the first division of logic, or "*die Lehre vom Sein*."\*

*Second Division.* Doctrine of Essence.—In the second division of logic, Being appears in a more determined, definite, and independent form. Instead of having the characteristic of bare empty existence, it has now that of real concrete existence, and gives rise to the doctrine of essence, "*die Lehre vom Wesen*."† This second movement of the logical process, as seen in the nature of things, answers to the second movement in *mind*, where the understanding separates the object from the consciousness, and places it as a distinct reality before us. Here, again, we have a threefold division. Essence may appear either as the *ground*, or substratum of existence (as in the words, matter, spirit) ; or it may appear as *phenomenon*, i. e., as expressing those qualities of objects which cannot be separated from them ; and then, by uniting the notion of substratum and attribute, we attain the conception of a *real thing* in plain contradistinction from that universal essence of which it forms a part. Here then is resolved the great problem before which the Eleatics paused, that of reconciling the individuality of each separate thing with the unity of the absolute essence.

The doctrine of essence contains the explanation of a great number of those philosophical ideas, which have played an important part in every system of metaphysics. Under its first movement, we have the deduction of the notions of identity and difference ; of concrete existence ; and of a *thing* as containing *properties* peculiar to itself. Under the second movement we have the ideas of a phenomenal world, of matter and form, and of relation generally, all deduced in philosophical order. Then, lastly, in the third movement, we have the union of the other two, giving the categories of substance, of cause, and of action and reaction. All these notions, with many of their collateral ideas, are grasped by the dialectic method, in its onward progress, and made to take their due position as organic parts of the whole system.

We have now traced the dialectic process through two of its

\* Logik, p. 201, *et seq.*

† Logik, p. 223.

spheres of action, and shown how, from the bare idea of being, we come at length to that of a distinct, essential, real *thing*. When we attempt to proceed beyond this, we get into a higher region of thought, the doctrine of notions (*die Lehre vom Begriff*), answering to the reasoning process in formal logic, and in nature answering to all organism and life, up to the highest developments of mind itself.

*Third Division. Doctrine of Notions.\**—The three divisions of logic will now stand thus in relation to each other:—1. The doctrine of BEING answers to the abstract conceptions of time and space, giving us only those ideas which are purely qualitative or quantitative. 2. The doctrine of ESSENCE answers to time and space, not in the abstract but the concrete, filled up, the one with actual existence, the other with real phenomena, such as those of substance, attribute, cause, and effect, &c. Then, lastly, the doctrine of NOTION (*Begriff*), refers to all those things which have peculiar characteristics of their own—real and definable objects, whether in the region of organized or inorganized existence. This last doctrine, that of notions, in the same manner as the other two, has three divisions: first, notion in its *subjective* point of view, giving the different movements of the mind as seen in simple apprehension, judgment, reasoning; secondly, notion in its *objective* point of view, giving us the conceptions of the three realms of nature—the mechanical, the chemical, and the organized; and, thirdly, we have the union of subject and object, expressed by Hegel in the word *idea*, which rises, also, through three successive steps: first, as life; then, as intelligence; and lastly, as the absolute idea—the summit of the whole process, and synonymous with Deity. It must not be supposed, that in this third division of the Logic, we have got beyond the region of *pure thinking*. We have simply traced the evolution of *thought* upwards, through its more empty and abstract forms; enriching it with a greater fulness of meaning at every step, until we have arrived at the conceptions which we find embodied in nature and the soul—those Platonic archetypes, pure thought in themselves, to which the universe itself is perfectly conformable.

To give a clearer idea of the several divisions and subdivisions of Hegel's logic, we shall subjoin the following scheme, which the reader may now compare with the above description.

\* *Logik*, p. 315, *et seq.*



## LOGIC COMPREHENDS,

## I.

## THE DOCTRINE OF BEING. (Die Lehre vom Seyn).

A. *Quality.*

- a. Being (Seyn.)
- b. Existence (Daseyn.)
- c. Independent existence (Für-sich-seyn).

B. *Quantity.*

- a. Pure quantity (Reine Quantität).
- b. Divisible quantity (Quantum).
- c. Degree (Grad).

C. *Measure.*

(Mass.) The union of quality and quantity.

## II.

## THE DOCTRINE OF ESSENCE. (Lehre vom Wesem).

A. *Ground of Existence.*

- a. Pure notions of essence.
- b. Essential existence (Existenz).
- c. Thing (Ding).

B. *Phenomenon.*

- a. Phenomenal world (Welt der Erscheinung).
- b. Matter and form (Inhalt und Form).
- c. Relation (Verhältniss).

C. *Reality. Union of Ground, and Phenomenon.*

- a. Relation of substance.
- b. Relation of cause.
- c. Action and reaction.

## III.

## DOCTRINE OF NOTION. (Lehre vom Begriff).

A. *Subjective Notion.*

- a. Notion as such (Begriff als solches).
- b. Judgment (Urtheil).
- c. Inference (Schluss).

B. *Object.*

- a. Mechanical powers (Mechanismus).
- b. Chemical powers (Chemismus).
- c. Design (Teleologie).

C. *Idea*.

- a. Life (Leben).
- b. Intelligence (Erkennen).
- c. Absolute idea (Absolute Idee).

In the above sketch of Hegel's Logic we have given only the chief divisions ; of the ingenuity and logical acuteness with which these divisions are deduced the one from the other, and the whole framework built up, we can give no idea whatever. To comprehend this fully, we must refer the reader to his *Cyclopædia of Philosophical Sciences*, (vol. vi.) published in a complete edition of his works by his most distinguished pupils (Berlin, 1840).

We must now proceed to the second division of philosophy, namely,

## PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE.\*

The transition from the logic to the philosophy of nature is by no means a clear and intelligible step in the Hegelian system. Logic is the region of bare thought ; the philosophy of nature is the region of *thought externalizing itself*. Nature is still thought, but thought in its objective movement, being the exact opposite to logical thinking ; while both combine in the philosophy of *mind*. In order to account for the process of thought in the universe taking that objective form in which it appears as nature, Hegel has recourse to a somewhat far-fetched doctrine concerning the descent of the absolute idea from its original unity, as subject-object, into a state of separation ; just as in pure logical thinking the understanding separates what was *one* in the original consciousness. Schelling, as we have already seen, regarded nature as a part of the process by which the absolute realized itself : he viewed the process of development accordingly as necessary, and regarded all existence to be the play of a supreme fate. Hegel regarded the dialectic movement, by which the absolute separates itself and externalizes itself in nature, as perfectly *free*, so that his pantheism did not profess to destroy the notion of the freedom and absolute personality of God.

Now, just as in logic the absolute process appeared in its three-fold movement, so also does it appear in the three corresponding

\* This forms the subject of the second volume of the second part of the *Encyclopædie*, in the most recent edition.

ones in nature. Nature in its empty undetermined forms (answering to the doctrine of Being) appears in that peculiar aspect which is taken of it in the science of *mechanics*. Here there are, first, the purely mathematical ideas of matter, as existing in time, space, and motion; next, there are the mechanical properties of matter, as gravitation, &c.; and, thirdly, there are the absolute properties as viewed at large in the construction of the material universe, where the fixed stars, the binary stars, and the solar system, give us illustrations of the different kinds of forces which are actually in operation.

The second division of the philosophy of nature is *physics*. Here we take into consideration, first, the general forms of matter, as earth, water, light, &c.; secondly, the phenomena of specific gravity, cohesion, elasticity, &c.; and, thirdly, the specific forms, as acids, alkalies, metals, &c.

The third division of this branch of philosophy is *organism*, in which the other two movements are combined. The first movement gave to nature its matter; the second its form; the third at length affords that in which matter and form are united. Here, again, we have first, the geological world; secondly, the vegetable world; and thirdly, the animal world; the last leading us to the point where the philosophy of nature ends and that of spirit begins. To give a clearer idea of the chief steps under which this branch is treated, we annex the accompanying scheme.

## PHILOSOPHY OF NATURE COMPREHENDS,

### I.

#### *Mechanics.*

- a. Mathematical properties.
- b. Mechanical properties.
- c. Properties of absolute motion in space.

### II.

#### *Physics.*

- a. General forms of matter.
- b. Relative forms of matter.
- c. Specific forms of matter.

## III.

*Organism.*

- a. Geological structure.
- b. Vegetable structure.
- c. Animal structure.

Each one of these triplets forms one complete pulsation of the dialectic process, and were it not entering too far into detail, each one of the minor divisions would be seen to contain a minor movement of the same threefold process as well. We hasten on, however, to the third division of philosophy, namely,

## PHILOSOPHY OF MIND.

At the point where nature leaves off, having carried on her operations to the very highest pitch of perfection in the human organization, the philosophy of mind begins. In this, as the third great division of philosophy, we have pure logical thought and nature (the subjective and the objective) fully combined. The steps of this part of Hegel's philosophy, corresponding with those in logic and nature, are as follows:—

## PHILOSOPHY OF MIND.

## I.

*Viewed subjectively.*

- a. Anthropology.
- b. Psychology.
- c. Will.

## II.

*Viewed objectively.*

- a. Jurisprudence.
- b. Morals.
- c. Politics.

## III.

*Absolute Mind.*

- a. Æsthetics.
- b. Religion.
- c. Philosophy.



Each one of these several points contains a separate branch of mental philosophy in itself. Thus, in the subjective movement, we have, under *anthropology*, the different races of mankind discussed, varying, as they do, according to the relative development of their moral and intellectual being. It is, in fact, the doctrine of the *soul* in its original constitution, varying, however, according to the physical peculiarities, the national characteristics, and different idiosyncracies of individuals. Under *psychology*, we have the nature and peculiarities of the different mental processes in feeling, perceiving, remembering, imagining, &c., all analyzed and arranged according to the Hegelian method, while under the title of *will*, we have the classification of our active powers, showing how they lead to all the results of practical life.

In the objective movement we are introduced to the whole range of *moral* philosophy, or mind in its relations to those without. This is divided—first, into the rights of person and property, as in jurisprudence; secondly, into the rectitude of actions generally, viz. morals; and, thirdly, into domestic and public duties, which may be termed (in the extended meaning of the word) *politics*.

Lastly, when we rise to mind in its absolute form, we no longer view it as belonging to the individual, but to the race, and look for its development, not in the life of a single man, but in the history of the world. The primary development of the human mind, in the process of civilization, is that of *art*; for the age of poetry precedes all others, and mythology is ever the form in which truth is first embodied, recognized, and taught. To this succeeds the age of *religion*, in which God is regarded as a distinct personality, separate from the world and separate from the mind of the worshipper—a Being to whom we owe entire allegiance and submission. Under this head Hegel discusses the various forms of religion which have appeared in the world, from the earliest ages to the present. Last of all comes the age of *philosophy*, in which religion rises to its pure reflective form, and truth comes forth from her symbols to appear in her naked reality. The conclusion, then, and at the same time the top-stone of mental science, is the *History of Philosophy*, as it has appeared in the world; in which we find thought developing itself gradually (according to the process given in the science of logic), from the period of Parmenides, who stood upon the lowest step (that of bare existence), up to the present day, in which Hegel himself has deduced the *absolute idea* in all the fullness of its truth and glory!

Most of the branches we have thus briefly indicated, were treated of by Hegel in distinct courses of lectures. With regard to the subjective branches, namely, anthropology, psychology, and the theory of the will, nothing, I believe, has been published in a separate form. Of the other branches, however, abundant material has been furnished by the editors of the *Encyclopædie*, to give us the fullest insight into Hegel's views on the several questions to which they refer. The "*Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*," (Elements of the Philosophy of Right,) was edited by Gans, and published in 1833, comprehending in one volume the Hegelian doctrine with regard to abstract right (jurisprudence), to morality at large, and to social rights or politics. The lectures on "*Æsthetics*" were edited by Hotho, and are considered among the most interesting of Hegel's works. Here we find the same trichotomy as in all the other branches of investigation, namely, art, or the beautiful considered, 1st, *in itself*, as a conception of the human mind; 2dly, in its objectivity, as seen in the successive schools of art, historically considered; and, 3dly, in its perfect realization, as seen in the special branches by which the beautiful has been expressed. The lectures on the philosophy of religion, together with those on the proofs of the Divine existence, were first brought out by Marheineke, in 1832, (2 vols. 8vo). Here, according to the same three-fold method, we have religion viewed, 1st, subjectively, giving us the abstract conceptions with which our religious life is conversant; 2dly, we have religion objectively considered, that is, the history of its various developments in the world; 3dly, we have religion fully realized and perfected in the eternal truth of the Christian doctrines. Nay, Christianity itself falls under the same law of development, for it reveals to us the kingdom of the Father, or Christianity in its pure conception—the kingdom of the Son, or Christianity in its objective development—and the kingdom of the Spirit, which is its completion, as manifested in its spiritual operation in the church. Lastly, the lectures on the history of philosophy were edited by Michelet, in 1834—5, (3 vols. 8vo.), and the volume on the philosophy of history, by Gans, in 1837. In these volumes Hegel has put forth all his power, displaying at once his vast acquaintance with the history of thought in the world, and his great capacity of reducing the phenomena given in history to an organic and systematic whole. These last lectures are, in fact, the crowning piece of his system, and, beside their intrinsic value, are remarkable as forming the basis of the French school of modern

eclecticism, which, under the impressive genius of Cousin, has achieved a reputation in every part of the civilized world.

Before we quit this, our skeleton sketch of the Hegelian philosophy, it will be desirable to give our readers some idea of its application to various important questions of a religious nature. First, with regard to the nature and personality of God, Hegel is far from departing so widely from pantheistic opinions as to admit a distinct personality out of and apart from all other finite personalities. With him God is not a *person*, but personality itself, *i. e.* the universal personality, which realizes itself in every human consciousness as so many separate thoughts of one eternal mind. The idea we form of the absolute is, to Hegel, the absolute itself, its essential existence being synonymous with our conception of it. Apart from, and out of the world, therefore, there is no God; and so also, apart from the universal consciousness of man, there is no Divine consciousness or personality. God is, with him, the whole process of thought, combining in itself the objective movement as seen in nature, with the subjective as seen in logic, and fully realizing itself only in the universal spirit of humanity. With regard to other theological ideas, Hegel strove to deduce, philosophically, the main features of the evangelical doctrine. He explained the doctrine of the Trinity by showing that every movement of the thinking process is, in fact, a Trinity in Unity. Pure independent thought and self-existence answers to the Father—the objectifying of this pure existence answers to the *λογος προφορικος* the Son, God manifested in the flesh; while the Spirit is that which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, the complete reunion of the two in the Church.\*

\* The opinions of Hegel on the personality of God, have been much contested. By many it is affirmed, that in the second edition of the "Religion Philosophie," the passage is effected from Pantheism back to a proper Theism. Michelet remarks on this point, ("Geschichte," Vol. ii. p. 646.) "The true doctrine of Hegel on the personality of God, is not that God is a *person* in the same sense that others are; neither is he simply substance,—He is the eternal movement of the *universal*, ever raising itself to a subject, which first of all in the subject comes to objectivity and a real consistence, and accordingly absorbs the subjects in its abstract individuality. God is, therefore, with Hegel, not a *person*, but personality itself, the only true personality; whereas the subject which, in opposition to the Divine substance, will become a particular person, is *evil* (das Böse). Because God is the eternal personality, he has eternally allowed the objectifying of himself (nature) to flow from him, in order, as spirit, to attain self-consciousness in the Church. If this spirit is man, then he is man no longer individually considered, but *God*, which in him has attained personality."

In contradistinction to this passage, I may give another from Hegel himself, (Philosophie der Religion, Vol. ii. p. 481.) The stand-point to which we have arrived is the Christian, and must be viewed by us a little more closely. We have here the idea of God in his entire freedom: this idea is identical with his existence; existence is the most empty abstraction, and the idea is not so empty that it does not contain this in itself. We have not to view the being of God in the poverty of abstraction, in its bare



Hegel's Christology, again, agrees in the main ideas with the evangelical doctrine, except that his attempt to deduce the whole from philosophical principles gives to it a complete air of rationalism. He views the idea of redemption as the reunion of the individualized spirit of man with the Spirit of eternal truth and love. By faith we become one with God, forming a part of himself, members of his mystical body, as symbolized in the ordinances of the Church. This view of the Christian doctrines has been more fully developed by Strauss, who has entirely denied a historical truth to the New Testament, and made the whole simply a mythological representation of great moral and spiritual ideas. On the doctrine of immortality, Hegel has said but little, and that little by no means satisfactory. However the depth and comprehensiveness of his system may charm the mind that loves to rationalize upon every religious doctrine, it can, assuredly, give but little *consolation* to the heart that is yearning with earnest longings after holiness and immortality.

In some other points, not of a religious nature, Hegel has given us many views of great originality. His philosophy of history is especially valuable, as containing investigations into the peculiar characteristics of the different ages of the world, that throw great light upon the intellectual progress of civilization. Into this, however, we shall not enter; we have attempted to give a comprehensive view of his whole system, just sufficient, we trust, to guide the student in appreciating the place it occupies at the head of the idealism of the present century, and must leave him, however unsatisfied with our details, to follow them up from the original source.\*

In reading the foregoing sketch, it will probably suggest itself to many of our readers—How could a system of philosophy so strange, so paradoxical, so entirely opposed to all the ordinary habits of thinking common to mankind at large, be seriously maintained by any earnest and truthful mind? A little consideration, however, may tend to show us, that his doctrine of absolute identity is not so unnatural and extravagant as some might at first imagine. Really speaking, it all turns upon two fundamental points; first, the unity of contradictories, or opposites, as the principle of human knowledge; and secondly, the identity of being and thought.†

immediacy, but we must view *being* here, as the being of God, the material for realizing the full idea of God.

\* Note F. Appendix.

† See Rémusat "De la Philosophie Allemande," p. cxxii.



Now, with regard to the former of these principles, there is, undoubtedly, a *germ* of truth in it, which every one must admit. What is knowledge, but the perception that two different things are fundamentally one? Take any judgment, any proposition you choose, and you find that it contains the assertion, that two different things form a unity or identity between them. The subject and predicate are the differences—the copula expresses their identity. In proportion as knowledge advances, the tendency to generalize becomes greater; differences become more and more merged into higher principles; until, finally, as all theists admit, the universe, with its infinitely diversified phenomena, is seen to spring by some process of creative power from God, the first cause—the highest unity; where, accordingly, we have the one and the multiple forming the very basis of all created existence. Thus Hegel's doctrine of the fundamental unity of opposites, which has been so often reproached as a contradiction in terms, has its *germ* in the common sense and common belief of humanity. The other principle, the identity of being and thought, is, perhaps, somewhat more abstruse, but still, it is not so utterly baseless as some suppose. For, if all finite existence can be referred, as we have just seen, to a primitive unity; if there is an absolute ground in which all things subsist; then the phenomenal, the finite, the so-termed *material*, is but mere appearance, the real substratum is the infinite essence. But this infinite essence only exists as it is *thought*; universal Being is a purely rational conception, a necessary idea; it does not come to its full reality except in the human consciousness. Hence, the real and ideal meet in one; the very essence of the former consisting really in a process of the latter.

Admit then these two fundamental principles, and the other parts of the Hegelian theory follow step by step. The ideal and the real being one, thought and existence being identical, the process by which thought is developed must be the process of the whole of nature; the laws of logic must be the laws of the universe; and the dialectic movement, or the method by which our notions are eliminated, is the method by which all things come into being and subsist. The rhythm of existence thus being found, all that is necessary is to apply it to the construction of a complex system of philosophy, which shall draw within its mighty grasp the totality of the phenomena of man, of nature, and of Deity.

Whilst, however, there are some considerations, which appear to justify the Hegelian hypothesis, yet there are, as it appears to

us, insuperable objections under which it labors. First of all, we would ask, Whence does this process, this great rhythm of existence proceed? Hegel pretends to have solved the whole secret of being; to have no realistic starting point; to begin with zero, and deduce everything. This pretension, however, is not fulfilled. The *law* of existence is still *assumed*, still unaccounted for; so that the huge fabric of philosophy he has erected upon it, however ingenious and admirable in itself, still is equally dogmatical, in its ground principle, with the pantheism of Spinoza, or the ordinary theism of mankind. *In principle*, it is just as easy to imagine an infinite *Being*, the God of Christianity, as the source of all things, as an infinite *law*. And such a supposition, we need not say, is infinitely more in consistency with the phenomena of the human mind, and of the structure of nature around us.

Secondly, there is a confusion between the logical or formal processes of thinking, and the real process of things themselves, which can never be reconciled with human experience, and never gain the practical belief of mankind. The logical idea commencing with nothing, simply by its own inward movement or self-unfolding, creates the universe! Of course we may, *in thought*, begin with the most abstract notion, and then go on adding attribute to attribute, till we have placed the whole concrete universe before us. But this can never be put down as identical with the process of creation itself. A logical or universal whole is, speaking realistically, a nonentity; whereas Hegel makes it the *essence* (*seyn*) which contains in it potentially the whole phenomena of being.

Thirdly, the system of Hegel is utterly inconsistent with the results of psychology, *i. e.* with the most obvious facts of the human consciousness. Human freedom entirely vanishes under its shadow. The man is but the mirror of the absolute; his consciousness must ever roll onwards by the fixed law of all being; his personality is sunk in the infinite; he can never be aught but what he really is. Moral obligation must here perish, because freedom is annihilated; and the law of progress being fixed, man becomes irresponsible; this conclusion is one against which no logical finesse can ultimately save us. Either the man (or the me) is himself absolute and infinite, or he is a finite personality, having the source of his being out of himself. To suppose the former, altogether contradicts the consciousness of self, which is that of a finite power capable of being resisted. If he is the latter, then there is that in being which does not pass through our own individual thoughts,

and beyond the logical process there is a something absolutely unknown.\*

Finally. In the Hegelian system, Theism, with all its mighty influence on the human mind, is compromised; for Deity is a process ever going on, but never accomplished; nay, the Divine consciousness is absolutely one with the advancing consciousness of mankind. This being the case, the hope of immortality likewise perishes, for death is but the return of the individual to the infinite, and man is annihilated, though the Deity will eternally live. Religion, if not destroyed by the Hegelian philosophy, is absorbed in it, and, *as religion*, forever disappears.†

Hegel died in the full blush of his reputation, and before he had published half the views, which he had matured, beyond the walls of the lecture-room. At his death seven of his most distinguished pupils combined, according to his own wish, to publish his lectures, collated at once from his own manuscripts, and from the notes they had themselves taken of them as orally delivered. The names of these seven are Marheineke, Schulz, Gans, von Henning, Hotho, Michelet, and Förster. Under their superintendence, an edition of his works has now been completed, which is regarded as the last and authoritative view of his whole system.‡ Not only, however, have Hegel's pupils done justice to the memory of their master by the publication of his works and remains, but, forming themselves into a school, they have at once defended his doctrines against the numerous attacks which they have had to sustain, and applied them vigorously to the different branches of theology, law, history, and science. Amongst these Henning and Schulz§ have further elaborated his views on natural philosophy; Gans on juris-

\* M. Rémusat has employed this argument with great force against the Hegelian method. "De la Phil. Allem." p. cxi.

† Among the modern French writers, there are many elucidations of Hegelianism. Among these, M. C. Rénouvier (*Manuel de la Moderne*,) has pronounced the method valid; Dr. Ott, on the contrary, in his work upon Hegel, takes throughout the part of a bitter and uncompromising opponent. Many of his arguments, however, are well worth considering.

‡ This edition consists of 17 vols. 8vo. Vol. i. contains the "Philosophical Treatises," edited by Michelet: vol. ii. The "Phänomenologie," by Schulz: vols. iii. iv. and v. contain the "Logik," edited by von Henning: vols. vi. and vii. the "Encyclopædia of Sciences," by von Henning, (which contain the "Logik" in a much briefer and better form): vol. viii. "The Principles of the Philosophy of Right," by Gans: vol. ix. "The Lectures on the Philosophy of History," by Gans: vol. x. The "Lectures on Æsthetics," (two first parts) by von Hotho: vols. xi. and xii. The "Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion," by Marheineke: vols. xiii. xiv. and xv. The "Lectures on the History of Philosophy," by Michelet: vols. xvi. and xvii. The "Miscellaneous Writings," by Förster and Böumann; to which a "Life of Hegel" has since been added by Rosenkranz.

§ "Grundriss der Physiologie," von C. H. Schulz.



prudence ;\* Michelet, on morals ;† Weisse,‡ Rötscher and Hotho, on æsthetics ; and Werder, on logic ;§ whilst in theology, a host of writers have sprung forth to wield the Hegelian weapons, and contend on every side for a religion of complete Rationalism.

It is in the department of theology, chiefly, that the great battle of Hegelianism has been, and is still being fought. Within the last ten years, indeed, philosophy and theology in Germany seem to have become almost synonymous ; the transcendent importance of the great fundamental principles of man's religious belief absorbing almost every other purely philosophical question. Incapable, however, of coming to a united understanding upon these topics, the Hegelian school has separated into *three* divisions, each regarding the nature of religious truth in a different point of view. To explain the variations of these three parties, we must observe, that there are two inward sources from which religious truth may be supposed to spring ; the one is the direct intuition of our religious nature, excited either by faith or experience ; the other is pure logical reasoning ; and it is according to the predominance of one of these sources over the other, that Hegelianism takes its lower or its higher pantheistic signification.

To illustrate this point, let us take the subject of music. The knowledge of music may be possessed in two different ways. It may be known by virtue of a fine musical sensibility ; or it may be known as a rigid science of time and intervals, quite independently of the æsthetic faculty. In the former case we should say, we understand music by virtue of our direct perception, or intuition of its nature and beauty ; in the latter case, we know it as the development of scientific ideas. Now, just so is it with *religion*. There is such a thing as a religious sensibility, or a religious perception, which looks at once upon the object of the religious affections, and derives a kind of intuitive knowledge of them ; but there is also, says the rationalist, a *science* of theology, in which the whole mass of our religious ideas are evolved by logical inference from fundamental and philosophical principles. Just in the same manner, then, as some might lay greater stress upon the musical sensibility, and others on the musical science, so also do some of the Hegelian philosophers appeal more to the religious intuition,

\* "Das Erbrecht in Weltgeschichtlicher Entwicklung," "System des Römischen Civilrechts," "Rückblicke auf Personen und Zustände," &c.

† "System der Philosophischen Moral." (1828.)

‡ "System der Ästhetik als Wissenschaft von der Idee der Schönheit."

§ "Logikals Commentar und Ergänzung zu Hegels Wissenschaft der Logik." (Berlin, 1841.)



and others to the evolution of religious truth, by the logical idea.\*

The first, and least rationalistic branch of the Hegelian school, is that which is represented by Göschel, Erdmann, Gabler, and Schaller. According to the view of these writers, our religious perception must be respected as well as the power we possess of drawing logical inferences. That it is possible to deduce rationally the whole sum and substance of theological truth, they freely admit, (otherwise they could not take their station among the rationalists,) but in every case, they affirm, our religious consciousness must be consulted, to *confirm* and *approve* the inferences of our reason. Hence, on the ground of this consciousness, they assert the full personality of the Deity, and likewise defend historically the literal views given by the Scriptures of the person of Christ, as the God-man—the Mediator between the human and the Divine. These opinions, there is every reason to believe, very much accorded with those of Hegel himself, who ever professed his belief in the ordinary faith of the Lutheran Church.

There is, however, a considerable difference in the views even of this branch of the Hegelian school. Göschel is by far the least rationalistic of the whole; in fact, he goes almost as far as Hinrichs, in affirming, that our religious perceptions are the *main thing*, and that philosophy is only of use in illustrating and confirming them. Gabler, Erdmann, and Schaller are in a purer sense of the word Hegelians; but instead of rejecting the natural religious perceptions as untrustworthy, they accept them in their full significancy, but attempt to assimilate them, by the logical process, so as to assume the matter and form of their philosophy.†

The second branch of the Hegelian school, at once the most numerous and influential, is represented mainly by Rosenkranz, Marheineke, Vatke, and Michelet. By these writers, the religious perceptions and feelings are only appealed to as a *secondary* source, by which we simply *illustrate* the results of logical thinking. Accordingly, the personality of God is taken by them in a far more general and pantheistic sense, as agreeing better with the nature of that dialectic process by which all theological, as well as other ideas, are developed. The doctrine, again, respecting Christ, his

\* The affirmation of one or the other of these elements as supreme, forms the twofold distinction of philosophers, which has become so celebrated in Germany, under the titles of Denkphilosophen and Glaubensphilosophen.

† They seek, says Michelet, "Das Glaubensresultat durch den dialektischen Process zu verdauen, und ihr eine berechtigte Stelle im Systeme anzuweisen."—*Entwicklungsgeschichte*, p. 313.

union with human nature, and his redemption of the world, is taken from its plain historical meaning, and made to represent general ideas, such as the reunion of the fallen and separated will of man, with the infinite reason—the soul of the world; while the immortality of the mind is made to refer, not so much to the duration of our personality, as to the general perpetuity of *thought*, of which our minds are but individual movements.

With regard to the more individual shadings of this branch of the Hegelian school, Rosenkranz stands nearest to those before mentioned, forming, as it were, the transition point between the two. With him, it seems a matter of *hesitation*, whether he shall assume the religious perceptions to be *unexceptionably* valid, and then seek to reduce them to a philosophical form, or whether he shall give to his logical procedures a more independent permission to eliminate their own results. Next to Rosenkranz, comes the celebrated theologian Marheineke; while Vatke and Michelet assume a still more rationalistic position—one, namely, in which the results of faith and reason are absolutely identified, and the religious perceptions made *one* with the logical results.\*

Up to this point, then, in the Hegelian school, religious consciousness and the deductions of reason had gone hand in hand, only with a varying preponderance of importance attached either to the one side or the other; but in the third and newest Hegelian party there is a complete breach formed between the two, it being formally declared that we have to follow the dictates of our reason. *to whatever extent they may contradict the dictates of our religious perceptions and instincts.* The representatives of this school are Strauss, Bruno, Bauer, Conradi, and Feuerbach. With them, pantheism attains the point at which it ever tends, that, namely, in which it becomes fully synonymous with atheism. In their system, no God is admitted to exist, out of and apart from the world; *i. e.* in the proper sense of the term, there is no God at all. With reference, moreover, to the New Testament, it is well known that these writers have rationalized upon it to the furthest possible extent, regarding the whole of the historical portion as a *designed* mythology, in which are conveyed to us great and immortal truths.

Thus, then, is the cycle of Hegelianism completed; and to make the best of these divisions, it is asserted by some, that the three branches above mentioned (usually termed the right hand, the centre, and the left), exhibit the threefold movement of the dialectic

\* See Michelet's "Entwicklungsgeschichte," (1843,) lecture 15.

process, and thus form in their combination the integrity of the whole school.\*

Since Hegel's death, the conflict between the Hegelian school and their opponents, (especially with Schelling, and those who adhere to his doctrine,) has gone on with unmitigated vigor, and even rancor. Up to the present hour, work after work is teeming from the press, in which the respective claims of these great absorbing systems are advocated; whilst on theological grounds they are both alike attacked by the more orthodox, with all the weapons of learning and eloquence.

To enter into this endless discussion would be altogether impracticable in the present sketch, and perhaps equally uninteresting to the majority of our readers. The general feeling amongst all, except those who are pledged almost to the very words of the master, is, that *Hegelianism proper* is on the wane. The idealistic movement found in it, its culminating point; that point is now passed, and a tendency is already manifesting itself in the general tone of philosophy, to come back to a more realistic system, in which matter and form shall not be confounded, or the divine personality denied, or the foundation of man's immortality undermined.

Mournful as are the *final* results of the sweeping rationalism we have detailed, the works to which it has given rise have tended to throw light, perhaps to an unprecedented degree, upon many of the most important points connected with the philosophy of matter and of mind, of human nature, and human destiny; neither shall we have to regret the whole rationalistic movement, if the atmosphere of truth is cleared by the storm that sweeps across it—if errors are carried away in its course, and the great foundations of man's belief left standing more visible and more certain than ever.

\* We may take the following passage, from Michelet's summer course of 1842, as a summary of the whole view here given of the present position of the Hegelian school:—

"The unfolded totality of the Hegelian school may be pictured in a brief compend. With the pseudo-Hegelians (Fichte, jun., Weisse, Branis, &c.) perception, under the form of faith or experience, is the sole source of positive religious truth. On the extreme *right* of the Hegelian school, perception, (as with Hinrichs,) is the absolute *criterion* of the results found by means of logical thinking; while Göschel gives it still a decisive voice in all religious affairs. Schaller, Erdmann, and Gabler, who form the pure *right* side, allow to religious perception a *consultative* vote, which, however, like a good ruler with his subjects, they never leave *unrespected*. Rosenkranz, who ushers in the centre, proceeds for the most part in accordance with the voice of perception, but in some cases rejects it. In Marheineke, the perception is the *witness*, who can only speak respecting the *fact*, while the question of law or right can only be decided by speculative thinking. On the left of the centre, (that taken by Vatke, Snellmann, and Michelet,) the perception is a true-hearted servant, who must subject herself obediently to *reason* as mistress. Strauss, on the left side, makes her a *slave*, while with Feuerbach and Bauer she appears verily as a *paria*."



If the reader will turn back to the commencement of this section, he will be able to refresh his memory respecting the twofold course which philosophy has taken in Germany since the time of Kant. In *his* system, as we then remarked, there is on the one hand, an idealistic, on the other, a realistic element. There is a real existence given in sensation, but yet all we know of it is bare phenomenon. The course in which the idealistic side of Kant's philosophy has flowed, we have now pointed out. We have seen the speculative method, as the modern idealism is sometimes termed, in its subjective movement, completely realized in Fichte : we have seen its objective movement set forth with great copiousness by Schelling : and we have seen it rising beyond both, up to its most abstract form, in Hegel. In Fichte, the Absolute is to every one his own individual self, beyond the powers and perceptions of which self, he shows, we are utterly unable to reach : in Schelling, the Absolute is the living soul of the universe, of which everything, both in the natural and mental world, is an expansion : in Hegel, the last realistic point is resolved ; the Absolute becomes a process, ever unfolding and renewing itself in the world, and that, too, identical with the process of thought—with the method of philosophy. Here we have idealism reaching its culminating point, the matter of our knowledge becoming synonymous with the form : thought one with existence.

Having traced the ideal side, therefore, up to this position, and witnessed its culmination, we leave it to futurity to mark its descent, and turn now to the *realistic* philosophy, which has originated from the Kantian principles. The immediate elaborator of this element was unquestionably Jacobi, whom, on chronological grounds, we ought now to have taken under review, but that his mystical tendency removes his system onward to a future chapter. There is one name, however, which stands forth with great prominence among the philosophers of the present age, who, though an idealist, has, almost single-handed, stemmed the torrent of ultra-idealism, and acquired a reputation, second only to the heads of those great systems, which we have already considered. The name to which I refer is that of HERBART.

John Frederick Herbart was born in the year 1776, at Oldenburg. In 1805, he became professor of philosophy in the University of Göttingen ; in 1808, he succeeded Kant at Königsberg ; and in 1833, returned to Göttingen, in order to supply the place of Schulz, where, in the summer of 1841, he died.



Herbart's philosophy was the reaction produced by the boldly-advancing idealism of Fichte and Schelling. Their extreme principles on the ideal side threw him back upon a completely realistic hypothesis, which, for many years, he sustained single-handed, with a patience and a logical ability that reflected the highest credit upon his talents and perseverance. In terming Herbart, however, a realist, we are not to suppose that he returned to the ordinary notion of matter, as being a hard, dull, impenetrable substance, that is perceived immediately by the aid of sensation. This position (that of common sense) he never admitted; on the contrary, he asserted, that we can never get beyond our own consciousness, but that all we can know immediately are the phenomena which take place there. From this principle, however, he drew a different conclusion from that of Fichte. Fichte asserted that the idea which actually passes through the mind is synonymous with its *objective meaning*: Herbart showed that the idea (the actual inward process) is one thing, and that the reality which is implied in it is another. We have, for example, the idea of matter; and as, of course, we know nothing of it which is not contained in our idea, Fichte concluded that, to us, matter, and the idea of matter, are the same. On the other hand, Herbart showed that the idea is simply the mental or subjective phenomenon, and that this phenomenon *implies* an objective reality, of the truth of which it is at once the voucher and the test. It is true that our ordinary perceptions involve, in many instances, the most palpable contradictions; and the consequence is, that some thinkers have lost all confidence in man's intellectual powers; while others have denied the reality of the objects themselves; but the proper course of philosophy is manfully to solve the difficulty, instead of falling into scepticism on the one hand, or pure idealism on the other.\*

The basis of all philosophy, then, according to Herbart, is the whole sum of the phenomena which pass through the human mind. Instead of laying down the existence of an absolute essence, from which all things are derived, he regarded the whole mass of our ordinary convictions as containing the matter, from which alone we must take our start in erecting a system of philosophy. That we have a mass of ideas, which are naturally formed in the mind by its own constitution, and the circumstances in which it is placed, none can deny: these ideas, then, we must detain, ex-

\* See the preface to his "Psychologie."

amine, elaborate ; and, if truth can be arrived at by man at all, it must be arrived at by this process. Herbart's notion, therefore, of philosophy was very simple ; it was an analysis and investigation of our ideas, so as to resolve any contradictions they may seem to imply, and to educe from them all the truth which they contain.\*

The process by which the necessity of philosophy comes to be felt is the following :—When we look round us upon the world in which we live, our knowledge commences by a perception of the various objects that present themselves on every hand to our view. What we *immediately* perceive, however, is not actual essence, but phenomena ; and after a short time, we discover that many of those phenomena are unreal ; that they do not portray to us the actual truth of things as they are ; and that if we followed them implicitly, we should soon be landed in the midst of error and contradiction. For example, what we are immediately conscious of in coming into contact with the external world, are such appearances as green, blue, bitter, sour, extension, resistance, &c. These phenomena, upon reflection, we discover not to be so many real independent existences, but properties inhering in certain substances, which we term things. Again, when we examine further into these *substances*, we discover that they are not real ultimate essences, but that they consist of certain elements, by the combination of which they are produced. What we term the reality, therefore, is not *the thing as a whole*, but the elements of which it is composed. Thus the further we analyze, the further does the idea of *reality* recede backwards ; but still it must always be somewhere, otherwise we should be perceiving a nonentity. The last result of the analysis is the conception of an absolute simple element, which lies as the basis of all phenomena, in the material world, and which we view as the essence that assumes the different properties which come before us in sensation. Experience, then, on the one hand, gives us a vast number of phenomena, which appear to be so many actually existing realities ; reason, on the other hand, obliges us to reject these phenomena as realities, and assign a simple element for the basis of them, as that which is alone *essentially* true. Here, then, arises a contradiction between reason and experience ; and as we cannot fall back upon scepticism without being involved in a still greater difficulty, we look to philosophy so to elaborate and interpret our ideas, both those of

\* *Lehrbuch zur Einleitung in die Philosophie.* See at the commencement.

experience and of reason, as to solve the contradictions, and to give us a clear insight into the truth. The philosophy which accomplishes this object is termed **METAPHYSICS**.\*

Now, in order to see what branches the science of metaphysics contains, we must consider how many fundamental ideas there are, to which our ordinary perceptions may be generalized. From the first moment we perceive objects around us, we begin to classify them, and express the classification by general terms; this process goes on until we come to the three fundamental notions of *thing*, *matter*, *mind*; the first being the notion of a unity with several properties; the second being that of an object existing in space; the third designating that which has self-consciousness. All these three notions give rise to contradictions in the following manner.

First, if we contemplate a *thing*, as *e. g.* a piece of gold, we observe that it is yellow, heavy, malleable, &c. And all these properties together go to make up the *unity* which we term gold. If one of these properties were taken away, it would be gold no longer; and if they were all taken away, nothing whatever would remain to our perception; so that here we come to the contradiction, that the unity is in fact a plurality. Secondly, if we contemplate the notion of *matter*, we perceive that it is that which fills a certain space, while at the same time it consists of atoms infinitely divisible; and which, therefore, in their ultimate form can fill no space at all. Here, then, is another seeming contradiction, viz., that atoms, ultimately immaterial or having no extension, should give rise to extended and solid substance. Thirdly, if we contemplate the *mind*, we find that it is at the same time in continual change or perpetual movement, and yet is ever the same unalterable personality. Now these three fundamental ideas, each giving rise to a separate contradiction, point us to three branches of metaphysics. The first is *ontology*, which in Herbart's sense means the science that treats of the nature and constitution of things in general, and more especially the explanation of the problem—"how can the one be a multiple, and the multiple a unity?" The second branch is *synechology* (from  $\sigma\upsilon\nu$  and  $\epsilon\chi\omega$ ), which is the doctrine of *matter*, or the phenomena of the real as existing in time, space, and motion. The third branch is termed *eidology* (from  $\epsilon\iota\delta\omega\lambda\omicron\nu$ ), which means the doctrine of ideas or images, and includes *psychology*, or the science of mental phenomena.†

\* For a clear and full statement of Herbart's philosophical stand-point, see Chalybäus' "Entwicklung," lect. iv.

† Consult the "Haupt-punkte der Metaphysik."



I. Of Ontology. The great problem here to be solved is, to show how different predicates can exist in one substance ; and conversely, how one simple substance can exhibit a plurality of predicates. This problem is explained through the medium of a principle which is termed by Herbart the *method of relations*. The principle is briefly as follows :—Instead of supposing a thing to be composed of one absolutely simple essence, we must suppose it to be composed of *many*, all independent of each other ; and it is the different relations in which they stand to each other, that give the appearance of many predicates existing in one subject. Just as a binary star appears one to the naked eye, but is seen to consist of two by the medium of the telescope, so an object in nature, *i. e. a thing*, appears to be one, but by means of philosophy is discovered to be manifold. The separate and independent essences of which all things are composed ever remain absolutely the same, as they are entirely self-sustained ; but when viewed in different lights, and from different points of view in relation to each other, then they exhibit a multitude of different characteristics.

To show how this principle accounts for the phenomena in question, Herbart explains very fully his doctrine of *accidental views* (Zufällige Ansichten). In mathematics, we know that one and the same line may be often viewed either as sine, or tangent, or radius of a circle, without its ceasing to be a straight line, and the same straight line. In music, again, a tone may be a fourth, fifth, or sixth, &c., according to the key in which we are playing ; so also here the same essences may remain the same, and yet *appear* different, according to the relation in which we view them. On this principle, then, Herbart seeks to explain the contradiction which lies at the basis of ontology ; *i. e.* to show that in different lights the same object may be both a unity and a plurality at the same time.\*

II. Synechology. The object of this branch of metaphysics is to give an intelligible explanation of the phenomena of matter ; to show how things exist or hold together in space ; and thus to solve the contradiction of infinite divisibility. To accomplish this purpose, Herbart first attacked and refuted Kant's theory of time and space, which, as we have seen, makes them simply the subjective laws or forms, under which all sensation is carried on. Instead of this, he showed that the notions of time, space, and motion, express certain *relations* in which objects stand to each other. Now the

\* "Haupt-punkte der Metaphysik," p. 10, *et seq.*



idea of extension, as applied to matter, is the direct result of the idea of space ; whatever, therefore, will explain the notion of space, will also explain that of extension.

Herbart's doctrine of *intelligible space*, by which he sought to elucidate these points, is in brief somewhat of the following nature : —He begins with viewing each ultimate monad as a mathematical point, thus expressing the negation of all extension with reference to them in their primary form. One mathematical point, as also one monad, expresses simply locality, and no space whatever ; if, however, we add another point to it, and then another to that, in the same direction, we get the idea of *a line*, which is the first dimension. By the addition of other points we are led in the same way to fill up the intervals by the notion of distance, and thus at length to complete the idea of space in all its three dimensions. Space, then, has nothing to do with the monads singly, and can in no sense of the word be attached to them ; but no sooner do we see them *in relation* to each other, than the idea of continuity, of space, of extension, arises in the mind. Precisely the same thing is true both of time and motion ; so that, by this same method of relations in another view of it, the main problem of *synechology* is solved as well as that of *ontology*.

Matter, then, according to Herbart, is in the ordinary sense immaterial, and without extension ; but it obtains all the primary properties, such as extension, inertia, &c., from the *relation* which the monads hold to each other. Upon the same principle he explained the phenomena of attraction and repulsion, and, then, of organization ; by which means he finds a transition from the abstract sciences of matter into the philosophy of nature, and a method of explaining the constitution of all the varied portions of the vegetable and animal world.\*

III. Eidology. In this branch of metaphysics, the principles already deduced in the other two branches are now to be applied to elucidate the phenomena of the human mind, and to show how those principles agree with our own inward experience. This is the part of his philosophy, which Herbart elaborated with the greatest assiduity, and in which he has most displayed, at once, the power and originality of his genius. The mind we feel to be *one* ; at the same time it is conscious of an ever-changing multiplicity of states and feelings, which we must show are perfectly con-

\* "Haupt-punkte der Met.," p. 18, *et seq.* Also, "Lehrbuch zur Einleitung in die Phil." p. 204.

sistent with its unity. Here, then, the method of relations again comes to our assistance, separating the human consciousness into its proper elements, and showing that, what could not be predicated of the individual parts, can be predicated of the whole, in their various relations to each other. The mind, as subject, is ever the same; but it sees itself, as object, existing in numerous different states—those, for example, of feeling, thinking, willing, &c., and all these different states we call at the same time one *self*.

To account for these different states, Herbart goes into a singular mechanical theory of consciousness; the idea of which is, that all mental phenomena are simply different *relations* in which the mind exists to other things. When these relations are such that no particular point stands out from the rest to claim our attention, but all, as it regards our consciousness, are in a state of equilibrium, we are in a condition of mental quiescence. When one particular point becomes prominent, then it represses the rest, just as a greater force does a smaller, and a corresponding state of consciousness is the result. When there is a struggle for some perception to become prominent over the others, the state of mind is termed *desire*. *Feeling* is the condition produced by the obtrusion of a perception between two antagonist powers. In this way Herbart explains all the facts of consciousness by a species of mechanical calculation, making them all result simply from the relations in which the mind stands to the different objects that work upon it.\* Having thus completed the province of metaphysics, properly so termed, he calls in, at length, the aid of *faith*, in order to lay a basis for the philosophy of religion, with which his system concludes.†

From this slight view of Herbart's method, it becomes at once evident, that it stands in direct opposition to the purely idealistic systems we have before considered. The reader, who has looked far into the history of philosophy, will not be at a loss to see the affinity there is between Herbart's theory of matter and that of Boscovich; while the similarity of his doctrine of monads to that of Leibnitz, compels the conclusion that many of his ideas must have been directly borrowed from that acute thinker. That Herbart has fully sustained his ground against the energetic idealism to

\* This forms the subject of his work entitled "Psychologie als Wissenschaft."

† "Lehrbuch," p. 213. Herbart's transition from theoretical philosophy to faith, as the ground of our religious conceptions, is nearly identical with that of Kant, from the pure to the practical reason.

which he stood opposed, would be too much to grant ; but, unquestionably, he brought to light much truth on the other side of the question ; nor, perhaps, have his exertions been amongst the least of the means, which have succeeded in giving to the philosophy of the present age an incipient, although a very decided realistic tendency.\*

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The names which have passed under our review, namely, those of Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Herbart, comprehend, with the exception of the mystical school, almost all that is really original in the German metaphysics. There are a few thinkers, however, of a recent date, who have attempted to mould the Hegelian philosophy into a more satisfactory form ; and a few others, who have set up some new philosophical principles, although they are not of sufficient reputation to need any very particular mention at present. The four writers who are termed by Michelet, in his "History of German Philosophy," pseudo-Hegelians, are Fischer, Fichte, jun., Weisse, and Branis. These authors all acknowledge the excellency of Hegel's *method*, and allow him due honor for the discovery, but they all agree with Schelling, that Hegel has only taken up the negative side of philosophy, that his system can only afford the purely logical process of thought, and that he has not succeeded in proving, that his categories express the real *essence* of existence as well as the *form*. In a word, they protest against the absolute idealism of the Hegelian system, and show the path back again to a realistic or positive philosophy, from whence the *material* is to be obtained, by which the bare forms of the categories of thought may be filled with a real and essential existence. With regard to the idea of God, moreover, they attempt to stop beyond the Hegelian point of view ; to deduce his proper personality ; and to explain the relation in which he stands to the world, as a distinct entity.

The avowed object which Fischer has had in view, is to take the dialectic method of Hegel and the realistic philosophy of Schelling together, and evolve them to a higher unity, in which the realism of the one should appear in all the consecutive and logical form of the other. Branis, in his "System of Metaphysics," ap-

\* Herbart's philosophy was peculiarly rich in its practical applications. Amongst his other works there is an interesting volume containing a "Kurze Encyclopädie der Philosophie aus praktischen Gesichtspunkten." (Halle, 1831.)

peals mainly to the facts of consciousness, as the living page in which all truth is to be read; resting the ultimate evidence of it, entirely upon faith in our own inward experience. Weisse has gained some reputation by the energy with which he has sustained against Hegelianism, the accusation of having put the abstract metaphysical form of truth, in the place of its concrete reality.\* The most celebrated, however, of this class of authors, is J. H. Fichte, whose philosophy presents on the whole the most complete specimen of the school we are now considering, and of which, therefore, we shall give a brief description.

Fichte's system follows a very consecutive development, which greatly facilitates its accurate comprehension. His first purely philosophical work was entitled "*Beiträge zur Charakteristik der neuern Philosophie*," (Contributions towards the designation of Modern Philosophy,) in which he clears his ground, and gives a popular view of his philosophical stand-point. His next work was a preparation for his philosophical system, properly so called;† giving simply a general sketch of it in the preface, but aiming at a systematic critique upon the different philosophical tendencies of the age. The third volume (*Grundzüge zum Systeme der Philosophie*) makes a formal commencement of the system, and carries it on through the whole of the subjective sphere; showing the development of self-consciousness from the first dawning of empirical knowledge, up to the highest form of speculative thinking. The fourth part, entitled *Ontology*, effects the passage from the subjective to the objective sphere, tracing the progress of Being from its most abstract to its most full and concrete form: which, then, leads to the philosophy of religion, by which the whole cycle is completed.‡

The starting point of all philosophy, according to Fichte, is the immediate *fact* of consciousness. This must be *to us* absolutely the primitive, for any other and more definite starting point would have to be sought for by means of those facts themselves. This being the case, philosophy defines itself as the *reflective development* of what the consciousness originally contains. "Self-consciousness," he remarks, "is the beginning, middle, and end of philosophy: so that philosophy can be formally described as the self-com-

\* The chief of Weisse's writings are a "*System der Ästhetik*," "*Grundzüge der Metaphysik*," and one entitled "*Die Idee der Gottheit*."

† "*Ueber Gegensatz, Wendepunkt und Ziel heutiger Philosophie*." (Heidelberg, 1832.)

‡ Of Fichte's "*Religion-Philosophie*," I can only speak from notes of lectures, which I took from him in 1841, before the work itself was published.



pletion, or self-examination (selbst-Orientirung) of the consciousness, respecting its original possession."\*

*First Epoch of Self-consciousness.*—The original state of our consciousness is that of sensation and perception. Here we are simply within the region of the instinctive intellectual life. Whether we regard the bare sensational feeling, or the immediate perception which accompanies it, we rise no higher than the lower animals in the scale of intelligence.†

*Second Epoch of Self-consciousness.*—Here we get into the region of representative knowledge. In the former epoch the mind is simply engaged with the material *which is actually presented to it*. Let that material (consisting of its own affections and the presentation of direct objects) be removed, and it would sink back into absolute unconsciousness. To prevent this, therefore, the mind has the power of retaining its ideas, and representing them itself as objects of continued contemplation. This is primarily effected by means of memory, carried on to a higher perfection by the imagination, and completed by means of language or signs.‡

*Third Epoch of Self-consciousness, (Das Ich als denkendes).*—Here we get into the region of abstract ideas. The constructive faculty begins to operate upon the data of consciousness, and reduces them into form and order. The laws or processes of thought are given in the science of logic. First, we have a simple *conception* (Begriff), which is explained as a general representation, viewed in relation to a particular object, (Eine Allgemeine Vorstellung, aber mit dem Bewusstseyn, und der Beziehung auf ein in ihm befasstes Besondere). Next we come to the *judgment* (Urtheil), which is the development of the conception up to a higher degree of generality (die Fortbestimmung des Begriffs durch sich selbst): and, lastly, to the *inference*, which is the merging of the more particular into the pure categories of thought—into the highest unities.§

*Fourth and highest Epoch of Self-consciousness, (Das Ich als erkennendes).*—In the first epoch we saw the bare material of our knowledge afforded by sensation and perception; in the second and third, we have seen the mind retaining its primary intuitions, and evolving them by the logical process to their highest unity. In the one we have *matter*, in the other *form*; but now, in this last sphere of self-consciousness, we have the reality of matter and

\* Grundzüge zum Systeme der Phil. p. 16.

† Ibid. p. 27.

‡ Ibid. p. 51—79.

§ Grundzüge zum Syst. der Phil. p. 80—204.

form combined together, in which combination real scientific knowledge first shows itself. This highest region of consciousness, then, we may describe as the region of *philosophy*, and we have only to trace the development of the different philosophical systems, in order to see the actual unfolding of the philosophical consciousness. This development has taken the forms respectively of the empirical, the reflective, and the speculative standpoint.

The empirical standpoint regards philosophical truth as the organic elaboration of the data of our outward experience. It comprehends the whole sphere of observation, of induction, of analogy, of sensational philosophy, and has attained its highest expression in the writings of Locke.\*

The reflective standpoint *begins* with scepticism (Hume)—the denial of the certainty of experience, as employed in the former philosophy. This leads on to the critical form of philosophy (Kant); in which the certainty of human knowledge is established, by a criticism of the subjective forms of thought. The critical philosophy, finally, merges in the doctrine of pure subjective idealism (Fichte); which is the negative side of speculative knowledge.†

Lastly, the speculative standpoint combines the empirical and reflective, and leads to the very highest forms of philosophical truth. This begins, first, with the pure faith-philosophy, a philosophy which asserts a direct intuition of the absolute as distinct from man, (Jacobi). Next it proceeds to the system of *absolute thinking*, in which the process of logical thought is regarded as being in itself a revelation of the absolute truth, (Schelling and Hegel). Lastly, by the union of the faith-philosophy with that of speculative thinking, we reach the highest point of self-consciousness, that in which the manifestation of God is regarded as the sole reality; the human mind lost, at length, in the Divine.‡ Such, then, is the subjective side of Fichte's philosophy, that in which there is a systematic evolution of the human consciousness by the dialectic method of Hegel, from its first phenomena to its highest speculative intensity.

Having accomplished the subjective portion of his labor, and carried up the development of the consciousness to the point where self-knowing becomes identical with the knowledge of Deity, Fichte

\* Grundzüge zum Syst. der Phil. p. 210—247.

† Ibid. p. 248—285.

‡ Ibid. p. 286—317.

now makes the passage to the *objective* sphere of his system—to the province of *ontology*. Here, the dialectic process again commences its operation, and, guided by the light it affords, the author goes through all the categories of existence, in the same manner as in Hegel's *Logic*, tracing it through the doctrines of being and of essence, up to absolute personality as predicated of Deity itself. In this part of his philosophy, however, there is a very essential difference between the view that is taken of our knowledge of the absolute, and that given by Hegel. In Hegel, Deity is the eternal process of self-development, as realized *in man*; the divine and human consciousness falling absolutely together. In Fichte, on the contrary, the Divine nature is never the direct object of our consciousness, but can only be known to us by its manifestations.

The knowledge of God and of his manifestations forms the subject of speculative theology, the very highest branch of philosophy. Of these manifestations there are three great spheres of observation—nature, mind, and humanity. In nature we see the Divine idea in its lowest expression; in mind, with its powers, faculties, moral feelings, freedom, &c., we see it in its higher and more perfect form. Lastly, in humanity, we see God, not only as creator and sustainer, but also as a father and a guide. History exhibits the development of the plan of his providence, which plan would only be to us a mere possibility, were it not realized in the flow of the ages, and witnessed by our own actual experience in the world. Thus, then, for the highest knowledge of God we have to fall back upon *experience*, the very point from which we started in the path of intellectual science. Here, therefore, we see the whole cycle complete. Philosophy begins with experience, and ends with experience, containing between these two poles all the various steps of speculative thinking which have raised the dim and empty experience of our primary life, up to the full and clear intuition of Deity in all the blaze of his brightest manifestation.

Such, in brief, are the main points of the system we proposed to describe. It may be wanting in the exuberant fertility of Schelling, and in the logical grasp of Hegel; but assuredly it puts the results of the German idealism more within the grasp of ordinary minds, and by linking the shadowy transcendentalism of the former systems to the *terra firma* of our actual experience, attempts not altogether unsuccessfully to combine the common sense of the one with the refined speculation of the other.

With regard to those idealistic philosophers who have put forth

systems of their own, independent of the greater authorities of the age; we might mention Suabedissen, Hillebrand, Troxler, and Krause, as among the principal; always, of course, excepting those who have taken a direction in favor of mysticism. The peculiarity of these writers is, that they have all made the attempt to combine in one the subjective and objective branches of the modern idealism, to unite the principles of Schelling and Hegel, and evolve something better than either. Suabedissen has with peculiar care elaborated the philosophy of religion, in which he has combated the idea, that God is the eternal process of the universe; and deduced from the bare notion of self-existence, the proper essence, spirituality, and personality of Deity.

Hillebrand also bent his chief attention upon this same theological point. His great principle is, that God, or the Absolute, has revealed himself to us immediately in our own consciousness: to prove, however, that we can trust our consciousness upon these points, must be the province of philosophy; and it is in this sense only that philosophy can give any proof of the existence of a Deity. Troxler's philosophy is of the microcosmic order. To him the source, the centre, the object of all philosophy is *man*. All truth and all knowledge is simply the revelation of the original elements of our own reason, and the *reality* which is implied in them. The soul is a perfect mirror of the universe, and we have only to gaze into it with earnest attention, to discover all truth which is accessible to humanity. What we know of God, therefore, can be only that which is originally revealed to us of him in our own minds.

Lastly, Krause terms his philosophy a system of transcendental idealism, in which, commencing with the subjective principle of observing what exists in our own consciousness, he raises himself step by step to the acknowledgment of one, eternal, self-existent being. To characterize these different shadings of the ideal philosophy of Germany more accurately would hardly consist with the brevity of our present plan; we shall, therefore, now take leave of this most remarkable page in the history of the world's philosophy, with a single observation.

The great peculiarity, which distinguishes the modern philosophy of Germany from that of every other country, is the use of the ontological instead of the psychological method. Descartes, Locke, and others, following up the Baconian principles, affirmed, that in taking a survey of the whole mass of human knowledge, we must *commence* with an observation of the powers and conceptions of



the human mind, as the instrument by which alone everything is to be comprehended; *i. e.*, we must make a full inspection of the facts of the case, before we can safely proceed to erect the edifice of intellectual philosophy. The German philosophers, on the contrary, despising this method, begin by laying down the most primitive and abstract *notion* we have of existence, as though it were a reality, and proceed onwards evolving the idea, until step by step they have constructed the whole universe. Now, those who follow the psychological method, give us for the most part a valid philosophy, but too often a shallow one. Bent upon the observance and classification of the facts of mind, they too frequently remain altogether within this circle without touching upon any of the deeper problems which ontology brings before us. On the other hand, the abettors of the ontological method, beginning to philosophize before they have investigated the instrument by which alone they can proceed, and, consequently, having no definite boundaries fixed within which human knowledge must be confined, are obliged to *assume* their first position, (such as that of intellectual intuition, or the dialectic process,) and thus are often imperceptibly led into a region of philosophy as extravagant as it is baseless. The true march of philosophy is the union of the two. Starting from the analysis of the human mind, trying, as Locke expresses it, the length of the line by which we are to sound the ocean of truth, we must go steadily on, directed by the light of induction, until, at length, we find ourselves legitimately landed within the region of ontology. From thence we may start upon a new voyage of discovery, still guided by an analysis of the facts and implications of our reason, until we run out our line to the full length, and wait for the brighter apocalypse of another world.

To decry the whole process of speculative philosophy, as it has developed itself in Germany, can arise from no other cause except ignorance or prejudication. Doubtless there may be much extravagance, and many erroneous conclusions to be met with in a sphere of research so lofty, and lying so much in the twilight of human knowledge; but the questions it raises are those in which we have the deepest interest, while the glimpses of great and comprehensive truths which it affords, give us the hope of a future, which shall draw aside the veil from much which is now obscure, and usher the human mind into the light of a more perfect day.

“Verily,” says an eloquent French writer, “to see imbecile and discouraged minds exhaust themselves in ridiculous attacks against

philosophy—to see them bent upon denying the part it plays in the history of the world; to see them ignore the reality of human science, and believe that a great nation can consume three-quarters of a century in mooted sterile chimæras, such a blindness of intellect can only fill one with astonishment; but when to this blindness is joined a spite and irritation against the triumph and empire of ideas, a holy emotion seizes the mind, and we in our turn, by virtue of our hope for the progress of humanity, reply to these declarations, Stop! do not commit an outrage upon our common mother—human thought; do not make use of the little that you do know, to insult that which you know not. Rest (for we will cheerfully allow you) in the easy paths of the old traditions; these traditions have themselves been a product of humanity, and are now its legacy; but we are not to be hindered from pressing onwards to fresh ideas, by such disdainful airs.”\*

We close our remarks, with the words of another philosopher, who occupies one of the highest stations in the literature of a neighboring country.

“It is time,” says M. de Rémusat, speaking of the German philosophers, “it is time that we should venture to fix our eyes upon the object which they have set before them, and to enter into the region in which they have marched; without, however, following their footsteps. We must imitate them, preserving at the same time those precious guarantees of method, of erudition, of language, of experience, which are the foundation of *our* philosophical wisdom. Let *us* bring reasons as well as they for grasping fundamental questions, but let us feel bound either to resolve them in a contrary sense, or to conclude upon the impossibility of resolving them at all. In one word, let us reinstate that which is most difficult, but most elevated in all philosophy, namely, *METAPHYSICS*.”

### SECT. III.—*The English School of the Nineteenth Century.*

In sketching the history of idealism generally, from the revival of philosophy in modern times, I termed that of our own country *polemical idealism*, as originating rather from opposition to sensationalism than from the spontaneous tendencies of the national mind. In Germany, the ideal tendency has ever seemed to spring

\* “Au delà du Rhin,” par E. Lerminier. Vol. ii. p. 114.

from the very soil, and to have flourished there without any of the excitement derived from opposition ; in England, on the other hand, it has lived upon warfare ; and whenever the bold advances of sensationalism have ceased, it has always been inclined to cease with them. The deistical writers, who at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries sustained their sceptical principles by expanding the germs of sensationalism, which lay hid in the philosophy of Locke, gradually died away ; and with them disappeared, one after the other, the traces of our idealistic philosophy. By the close of the eighteenth century the school of English idealism may be said to have become altogether extinct, and every attempt at metaphysical speculation seemed to merge in the supreme authority of Locke, or the efforts of his successors.\*

At the opening of the nineteenth century, therefore, we may consider that, as far as idealism is concerned, the ground was perfectly clear. Sensationalism, indeed, was again advancing with rapid strides, urged on by the impulse acquired from the brilliant literature of France, and fostered by the writings of Priestley, Belsham, and the school of which they stood at the head ; but of the ideal tendency hardly the slightest appearance was left in England to remind us, that it was still the country of Cudworth, Clarke, and Berkeley. Neither, indeed, has the present century, in its progress, been very forward to supply the metaphysical deficiency which existed at its birth. That the reaction has now set in we fully believe ; but it has come tardily and unwillingly, and it may yet, to all appearance, be some years before an energetic anti-sensational school shall grace the literature of our native land.

With regard to the *sources*, from which the seeds of a more rationalistic system of philosophizing have been slowly imported, there are two which almost immediately suggest themselves to our minds, namely, Scotland and Germany. Great as is the difference between the philosophy of these two countries, yet there are, unquestionably, some important points of resemblance, which place them together as the antagonists of empiricism ; and we can hardly be mistaken in saying, that all the reaction which has been experienced in England against sensational principles has borne the complexion of one or other of these two philosophical schools. Scotland, true to its principle of "common sense," has insisted on

\* A few idealistic works, such as Drummond's "Academical Questions," appeared about the beginning of this century, but not of sufficient weight to need any particular mention.

the validity of those ideas, which appear to be the natural product of the human reason, and resisted every attempt to resolve them into sensational elements; and Germany, boldly grappling with the deepest questions of ontology, has drawn a broad distinction between the phenomenal world, as viewed by the senses, and the real world, as comprehended by the intellect. In both cases there is a direct appeal made to the authority of reason, and an equal determination not to remain shut up within the boundaries of sense.

England, with the clear-headed practical wisdom for which it stands pre-eminent, has been gazing, from time to time, upon the results of both these schools, and has been considering what there is in each that is likely to prove unsound, and what that can be safely adopted. It has entered with earnestness into the philosophy of Reid, and appropriated its results without copying its too often tedious dialectical dulness; while, on the other hand, it has been lately approaching the borders of the German spiritualism, and showing a disposition to sift the wheat out of the large mass of chaff which that voluminous school presents. From these circumstances, then, we are furnished with a principle of classification under which to describe the manifestations of idealism, which have appeared in England during the present century. We shall divide them into two classes:—First, the English metaphysical school, which is predominantly under Scottish influence; and secondly, that which is predominantly under German influence; leaving at the same time in each some scope for the working of the peculiar characteristics of the national mind.

#### (A.) SCOTO-ENGLISH METAPHYSICIANS.

That so profound a writer as Dr. Reid, followed up by the elegant and learned additions of Dugald Stewart, should raise a vigorous school of philosophy in Scotland, without producing some effect upon English philosophical thinkers, could hardly have been possible. The labors of these northern metaphysicians, more especially in disabusing the world of the errors couched under the phraseology of the ideal system, became, during the earlier part of this century, more and more appreciated throughout the whole of our country, until gradually their works came to be widely regarded in the south as the best text-books of intellectual science. The tone and character of philosophical writing in England by degrees



were altered; and if it did not *entirely* follow the Scottish models, yet, at least, it exhibited the great influence which those models had exercised upon the ordinary habits of metaphysical thinking. It is the history and nature of this influence, accordingly, which we now purpose to depict. To do this we shall not make out any chronological list of authors, who have manifested this leaning to the northern school; but we shall briefly present the names of the *most prominent* metaphysical writers, who have been distinguished respectively by a more near or remote degree of approximation to the Scottish system, as illustrative of the influence of that system upon the country at large.

1. And first, we notice those who have followed Scottish authority almost without deviation. Not a few of our countrymen, (who have either been educated at the Scottish universities, or have confined their philosophical reading to the volumes of Reid, Stewart, and Brown,) have so entirely imbibed the philosophical spirit of the north, as never to depart from it except here and there on some very few, and those unimportant points. Those who have read Dr. Payne's "Elements of Mental and Moral Philosophy," will see in it an excellent example of the style of metaphysical writing we are describing. With good abilities for analysis, and a mind well versed in habits of abstract thinking, the author has furnished us with an abridgment of Brown's philosophy, which, while it wants the poetry of the original, at least equals it in the clear and succinct statement of the philosophical doctrines which are advanced. In the moral department, moreover, the errors and imperfections of Brown are well portrayed; and an attempt is made, if not entirely successful, yet at least forcible and well-sustained, to lay afresh the foundations of the emotional theory of morals. In this attempt he has been seconded by Spalding, in his "Philosophy of Christian Morals," another author, (now unhappily no more), who, while he adopted for the most part the Scottish system of philosophizing, yet knew well how to take an original view both of its principles and results. To dwell upon this peculiar feature of our English philosophy, however, is unnecessary, since we may regard it almost as a pure reflection of the Scottish school; let it suffice here to notice the simple fact, that such a reflection has existed in this country, and has given rise to some few excellent digests both of moral and psychological science.

2. We may point out the existence of certain other metaphysical writers, who have used the productions of the Scottish school,

not so much in the light of *authorities*, as of *guides* and incentives to their own independent thinking and research.

At the head of these we should place ISAAC TAYLOR, a name now, indeed, better known in the controversies of the theological than those of the philosophical world. The metaphysical works of this profound and voluminous author began with a small book, entitled "*Elements of Thought*," which has gone through several editions, and remains, to the present day, we believe, the only brief and elementary introduction to mental philosophy (which is worthy the name) in our own language.\* The works, however, upon which Mr. Taylor's philosophical reputation now mainly rests, are the four volumes, which appeared successively under the titles of the "*Natural History of Enthusiasm*," "*Fanaticism*," "*Spiritual Despotism*," and "*The Physical Theory of another Life*." In these treatises, he has opened what may be considered, in our own land, a new field of philosophical observation. Impatient of confining himself to the study of mind in its isolated state; not content, like the closer followers of the Scottish system, simply with looking within, and marking the processes of the *individual self*, he has cast his eye upon the broad surface of humanity, and attempted to gather results from the *action of mind*, as seen working on the vast theatre of the world. Mr. Taylor's genius is of the telescopic rather than the microscopic cast. In the sweep of his thought he may overlook some of the smaller points which lie in the road, but assuredly the range of his vision is far beyond men of the ordinary stamp, and his power of generalizing often of the most striking character. Every volume he has published is, in its tone and spirit, a stern rebuke to the pretensions of that shallow sensationalism, which is apt to carry away the unreflecting mind by its vaunted simplicity, and bears an unequivocal witness to the majesty of the human reason, even in its wanderings and its follies.

With all this independence of thought, with his capacity of grasping great principles, and drawing inferences from the widest survey of facts, yet there is still, we think, impressed upon many pages, the bias derived from the Scottish philosophy. With a mind so vigorously constituted, a spirit not to be daunted by difficulties, a reason that does not shrink from the most recondite and startling conclusions, when they come in its way, and a disposition to iden-

\* Since the above was written, there has appeared a little work, entitled, "*Outlines of Mental and Moral Science, intended as introductory to the Logic, Metaphysics, and Ethics of the University Course*,"—Dublin, 1846. It is comprehensive and useful to the young student, but not much to be depended on beyond the Scottish philosophy.

tify truth, though it lie at present in the twilight of man's vision, we see everything in this author that would almost necessitate a sympathy with the more able and profound of the continental metaphysicians, were his sympathies transferred for a time from Britain to Germany. An elaboration of the most valuable points of the higher metaphysics, adapted to the capacity of English minds, would, in such hands, prove of incalculable service, in satisfying the now growing demand for a sounder and more comprehensive system of philosophy. For the realization of this service, however, we have no ground of expectation, as Mr. Taylor has become too much entangled in party strife to be able to devote himself to those deeper problems, from neglect of which such strife really proceeds. It is not, assuredly, one of the least complaints we have to make against the din of theological controversy, that it should entice minds such as these from the calm pursuit of a lofty and spiritual philosophy into its vortex, and cause the more local and temporary questions of the day to absorb those intellects, which might be establishing the greater principles that lie at the foundation of human knowledge, and by the establishment of which, alone, we can hope for repose from the noise and confusion of lesser contention. As it is, however, the name of Isaac Taylor, in connection with the philosophy of human nature, as developed in his *Histories of Enthusiasm, Fanaticism, and Spiritual Despotism*, in connection with his physical theories on the spiritual state, and also in connection with his more recent advocacy of the sanctity and inviolability of moral obligation, will ever hold a decided place in the history of English thinking during the nineteenth century.

3. There is yet another class of thinkers, sometimes expressing their opinions through the pages of the *Magazine or Review*, and, in a few instances, by original works, who, while they oppose the Scottish philosophy *as a whole*, yet avowedly borrow from it many of their views and principles. Such a writer is Mr. Smart, the author of a volume containing three separate treatises, and entitled, "*Beginnings of a New School of Metaphysics*." Mr. Smart is a professor of elocution of long and established reputation, and has been allured from his proper department—that of rhetoric—into the kindred topics of logic and metaphysics. His first work upon these subjects was entitled "*Sematology; or, the Doctrine of Signs*," in which he lays down the respective nature and limits of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. The view which is taken of the two latter branches gives us a very clear line of demarcation between

them; logic being regarded as "the right use of words, with a view to the investigation of truth," and rhetoric as "the right use of words, with a view to inform, convince, or persuade."\*

According to these definitions, logic is the art of gaining knowledge through the medium of words, while rhetoric has the sole office of placing them in such positions, whether they form syllogisms or anything else, as to inform or convince others. This division has certainly the merit of some degree of originality, and the method in which the matter is argued is highly ingenious; although we cannot make up our mind as to the propriety of altering so widely the ancient landmarks between the two branches in question. As a metaphysician, Mr. Smart proposes to remodel and revive the philosophy of Locke, and combine with it the more recent results of the Scotch metaphysicians.† Through the whole of his treatises, great stress is laid, as might be expected, upon words, as the signs and media of our thoughts. He wishes, in fact, to do away with the philosophy of mind, as such, and to reduce all science to these three branches:—1. The study of things physical, or those which exist distinct from our thoughts; 2. The study of things metaphysical, or those which do not exist apart from our thoughts, (as a circle—man—good—the edge of the table—the power of God;) and, 3, Logic, which is to show the method of procedure to be followed in both.‡ Many good thoughts are scattered up and down these pages, although, as a whole, we cannot divest ourselves of the feeling that they lead to an indefinite and unsatisfactory result. They afford us, however, at present, a very obvious example of the working of the Scottish philosophy upon the modern Lockian school of England, and the influence it has had, both in moulding its phraseology, and in *reversing* its sensational tendency.

4. We mention, lastly, under this head, the present Cambridge school of metaphysics, which is the *transition point* between the English philosophy that partakes of the Scottish, and that which partakes of the German character.

For above two centuries past, the University of Cambridge has given indications of a sympathy with metaphysical speculation, which, though sometimes almost disappearing, has ever and anon made its reappearance as circumstances have called it forth. During the seventeenth century, the Platonic divines, to whom we have before referred, excited a spirit of philosophical inquiry which

\* *Sematology*, p. 87.

† *Ibid.* p. 160.

‡ *Sequel to Sematology*, p. 30.



must be reckoned among the most remarkable literary manifestations of the age. Locke, though himself one of the ornaments of Oxford, yet, after his death, was far more zealously studied and admired at Cambridge than in his own university, and it was there, first, that a school of metaphysics was formed which owned him expressly as its authority and its guide. Dr. Law, one of the greatest advocates of the Lockian sensationalism, was a resident at Cambridge, and Dr. Hartley, the originator of the modern school of association, was a student at the same university.

The earlier philosophical school of Cambridge was idealistic; the latter was decidedly sensational. Perhaps the brilliant discoveries of Newton in physical science may have tended to absorb all purely metaphysical investigation, or where it did not absorb, to divert it into a more objective channel. But, notwithstanding the ardor with which physical science long has been, and still is, studied at Cambridge, we are mistaken if the dawn of a new philosophical spirit is not even now manifesting itself within the walls of that university. Many are the intimations which are given there from time to time of a sympathy with the German idealism; many the attempts to revert from the wonders of nature to the deeper wonders of the spirit of man; many the intimations that, amidst all the blessings conveyed by the extension of physical science, yet "there are fields of grander discovery; that though Nature's works be great, we are greater than all these; that what we can least do without is not our highest need; that man cannot live by bread alone."\*

The new intellectual spirit, now rising in the university of Cambridge, may be perhaps most clearly seen in the reform of its moral philosophy. Paley, who stood almost alone for a long space of years as *the moral philosopher* of Cambridge, was clearly of the empirical school, and accordingly advocated, with some peculiarities of his own, the sensational theory of ethics, that which grounds all virtue upon utility. The reaction against this school has now most decidedly set in. Very plain intimations of it appeared as far back as the year 1834, when Professor Sedgwick published his admirable Discourse on the studies of the University, and attacked the philosophy of Locke and of Paley, both in their principles and in their effects. "The Essay on the Human Understanding," he remarks, "produced a chilling effect on the philosophical writings of the last century, and many a cold and beggarly

\* *Vide* Professor Lushington's Inaugural Lecture at Glasgow.

system of psychology was sent into the world by authors of the school of Locke, pretending, at least, to start from his principles, and to build on his foundation. It is to the entire domination his Essay had once established in our university, that we may perhaps attribute all that is faulty in the moral philosophy of Paley." Again, the same author, speaking more particularly of the philosophy of Paley, sums up his many lucid remarks in the following striking and emphatic words:—"Lastly, we may, I think, assert, both on reason and experience, that wherever the utilitarian system is generally accepted, made the subject of *a priori* reasoning, and carried, through the influence of popular writings, into practical effect, it will be found to result in effects most pestilent to the honor and happiness of man."

These are by no means the only indirect evidences, which might be adduced, of a nascent idealistic school in the university of Cambridge. It seems almost certain, that the reaction against the excessive pursuit of physical science, the growing sympathy with the most lofty-minded of the German philosophical writers, the profound, and, at the same time, elegant reflections upon spiritual truth, which for some time past has characterized many of the sons of that university, *must* give rise to a spiritual philosophy which, like that of the seventeenth century, *may* play an important part in the future literature of our country.\*

It is, however, in the writings of Professor Whewell that we are to look for some of the more marked characteristics of the modern Cambridge metaphysics. The influence of the Scottish and German philosophy are there almost equally visible, but both receive a coloring from a mind deeply imbued with physical science, and accustomed to walk amongst the highest regions of mathematical investigation. The great work in which Dr. Whewell has embodied his metaphysical opinions is that entitled, "The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences," the object of which is to show the foundation principles of all scientific research. This work is divided in two parts, the former of which treats of *ideas*, and the latter of *knowledge*. In pursuing the investigation of our ideas, Dr. Whewell has closely followed some of the principal results of the Kantian philosophy. In imitation of Kant, for example, he shows, that in all our notions we have to distinguish the *matter* and

\* It should not be omitted, that the writings of Coleridge have probably been the main exciting cause of this reaction. Several of the Cambridge theological writers, such as Julius Charles Hare and others, have clearly imbibed largely of the spirit of those writings.

the *form*, the matter coming through the senses, the form being the mould in which this matter is shaped by the mind itself.\* Time and space, which, with Kant, are the two categories of sensation, are viewed by him virtually in the same light, namely, as the two necessary *conceptions*, under which all our sense-perceptions appear.† A sensation itself he regards as the bare impression of an external object upon the mind; the *form* under which that sensation is viewed he terms an *idea*.‡ Those ideas which are the ground forms of our knowledge, such as time, space, cause, are called *fundamental*; secondary ideas arising from them, such as length and breadth, number and succession, are termed *ideal conceptions*.§ In all this train of thinking the philosophical student will not fail to see not merely a tendency to, but a decided appropriation of, some of the most valuable parts of the Kantian metaphysics.

Whilst, however, we discern, on the one hand, the influence of Germany, there are several points, on the other, in which the results of the Scottish metaphysics are very manifest. One of the principal of these is the adoption of the muscular-tactual sense, as developed by Brown; a theory which Dr. Whewell, in fact, not only adopts, but carries out still further, so as to account for many of the phenomena of vision, as well as those of resistance.|| In the general phraseology of the work, indeed, as well as in some of the theories it upholds, we plainly see that the writings of Reid, Stewart, and Brown, have had, perhaps imperceptibly, no inconsiderable influence upon the mind of the author.

Without entering more minutely, however, into the peculiar features of the elaborate treatise before us, we must endeavor to show in what manner it may be regarded as presenting a very important step in the transition, which philosophy is now undergoing, from the sensationalist to the idealistic tendency. The principal points where this transition process is exhibited in the work before us are the following.

1. In the broad distinction laid down between sensations and ideas; a distinction, in which (unlike that of Locke, Mill, and many others) the latter are shown to have no direct dependence upon the former, but an *a priori* existence of their own, as original forms or categories of the understanding.

2. In the opposition that is pointed out between necessary and

\* Aphorisms vi. viii.; also vol. i. p. 29.

† Vol. i. p. 25, *et seq.*

‡ Book iii. chap. v.

† Aphor. xx. to xxx.

§ Vol. i. p. 36, *et seq.*

contingent truth, the one being grounded in experience, the other in the mind's own primitive constitution.\*

3. In the doctrine propounded concerning time and space as being the forms of all our perceptions, and existing consequently in the mind previous to our first sensations.

4. In the explanation that is offered of the notion of causation, as the fundamental idea, on which the mechanical sciences are founded, and not an effect of habit or association.

5. In the view which is taken of human knowledge generally, as resulting from the appropriate combination within the mind of facts and ideas.

Dr. Whewell's work, besides its own intrinsic excellence, has likewise the merit of being the first in our own country in which the logic of induction has been fully and fairly discussed. Since its appearance, indeed, it has met with a formidable rival in Mr. Mill's "System of Logic," but by no means yields to it, as it appears to us, either in the accuracy of views, depth of analysis, or copiousness of examples. Presumptuous as it may seem, to judge between two works of such unquestionable merit, nay, which may be both viewed as the highest efforts of the human mind upon these subjects, we cannot forbear expressing our belief, that Mr. Mill, biassed by the psychology he has inherited almost by birth, has neglected some of the most important subjective elements in the formation of our simple and original conceptions, which elements the Cambridge philosopher has seized often with great clearness, and illustrated with great power.

In brief, Dr. Whewell, though an ardent lover of mathematical and physical science, has never allowed the earnest pursuit of objective knowledge to obscure the necessity of investigating the subjective grounds, on which these pursuits ultimately repose. He has boldly grappled with the metaphysical conceptions which lie at the basis of science, overturned the sensationalism which too often has attached itself to the physical inquirer, shown with admirable clearness the dependence of all objective knowledge upon subjective ideas, and raised, we trust, an effective barrier against the recurrence of those abuses, to which the Baconian principles have so often been exposed. Respecting Dr. Whewell as a moralist we would rather observe an *unassenting* silence. As his work on morals does not profess to contain a full discussion of the principles of ethical philosophy, we pass it by with the hope, that when

\* For a fuller account of this point, see our remarks on Mill's "Logic."



he undertakes to develop them, the subject will have assumed a more definite form, than it appears at present to have assumed in his mind. We must pass on, however, to the consideration of that more decisive influence, which the German philosophy is at present exerting on our country.

(B.) GERMANO-ENGLISH METAPHYSICIANS.

The voluminous and profound school of German philosophy, though somewhat repulsive in its first aspect, could not in the nature of things remain shut up within the limits of the German States. Philosophical thinking, in this as in most other cases, has pursued its course irrespective of all national barriers, and has already found its way into England, France, and America. Amongst our own countrymen, Sir James Mackintosh, whilst in India, obtained some little insight into this philosophy, although he never gave the results of his investigations on it (which we imagine were not very profound) to the world. The first of our English thinkers, as far as we know, who entered with real enthusiasm into the subject, and clothed the thoughts of German philosophical writers in the English dress, was Coleridge. Much of the revival which spiritualism has more recently experienced amongst us, is probably due to the zeal and eloquence, with which that extraordinary man advocated his doctrines of modern Platonism, doctrines to which he was manifestly led by his ardent study of German philosophy.

In France the modern German idealism has found a still more energetic and efficient champion in M. Cousin, the effects of whose writings upon philosophy generally are probably but now in their infancy. America, too, has recently been arousing herself from the dream of practical utilitarianism, and giving birth to a school of philosophy (grounded chiefly upon the writings of Cousin) which bids fair to prove as productive, though not certainly as profound, as the European sources from which it springs. Amongst these, George Ripley and Dr. Henry have done good service by presenting their country with many excellent translations from the French eclectic writers, which have also found their way into this kingdom. H. P. Tappan of New York has re-argued the question of the freedom of the will, in opposition to the rigid conclusions of Jonathan Edwards, and given a very lucid compendium of logic

on the principles of the new philosophy. The names of Emerson, Brownson, and Parker are well known through various of their productions, which have been reprinted in England, as belonging to the school of American Transcendentalism; while a monthly publication, termed "*The Dial*," the organ of this party, has until lately brought over to us an exhibition of the progress which idealistic principles are making upon the Western Continent. With such seeds of idealism scattered amongst us from so many different quarters, all originating primarily from the philosophy of Germany, it were unreasonable not to look for some decided effect upon our own national habits of thinking.

In adverting to the philosophy of England, which bears the German stamp upon it, almost every one will immediately recall the name of Thomas Carlyle, a name which stands first and foremost among the idealistic writers of our age. In bringing the works of Carlyle for a moment before our attention, we shall not give any opinion respecting his *theological* sentiments, inasmuch as these lie quite beyond our beat, and have to be judged of before another tribunal, besides that of *a priori* reasoning. Neither do we wish to track his philosophical views to the German originals, from which it is unquestionable that many of them have sprung. In the case of a writer so powerful, so original, and so full of native fire and genius, it is a thankless task at best to assign a foreign paternity to the burning thoughts, that we find scattered with no sparing hand almost through every page. That Mr. Carlyle has learned much truth, and added much inspiration to the force of his genius from the literature and philosophy of Germany, he would himself be among the first to own; but his sentiments have not been so much borrowed from these sources, as inspired from them: he has used these philosophers as his familiar companions, rather than as his masters; and instead of sitting at their feet, we should rather say "that his soul has burned within him as he walked with them by the way."

It is in vain that we open the volumes, which have come from the pen of this fertile writer, in order to find there a *system* of philosophy; and yet his philosophical opinions may be traced there with a clearness and a certainty which leave no room either for misunderstanding or doubt. The great and prominent feature of all his writings is a marked contempt for the shallow objective sensationalism of the age we live in; and an earnest struggle for the re-establishment of an exalted and a spiritual philosophy. He has

seen clearly and felt deeply, that the objective element in our knowledge is threatening to absorb everything else ; that our literature, our science, our laws, morals, politics, and religion, are all tainted with this tendency ; and he considers it to be his mission to lift up the voice like a trumpet, in order to warn the age of its folly and its danger. The idea of *self*, the mind, the real man, he considers as having degenerated almost into that of a living machine, hardly separated by a boundary line from nature in her visible organization ; the idea of the eternal, the infinite, the divine, has become too often the artificial God of a sect or party ; it is his aim, therefore, to hold up these two fundamental thoughts again to our view, to show their great reality, and to infuse by this means into the philosophy and feeling of the age precisely *the two elements*, which it has either marred or lost. Whatever be the subject on which he writes (and he writes more or less upon nearly all), this aim is never lost sight of, nay, appears to be the great ruling thought around which the others cluster as their central point. If he comes upon morals, with what infinite scorn is it that he scouts and tramples upon "the Gospel according to Jeremy Bentham ;" with what intensity does he point out as existing in God the reality of an eternal justice, and in man the reality of an eternal obligation, that must break down every passion and every selfish interest until it be accomplished. If he enters the wide field of law and politics, you see him impatiently pushing aside all the clever arithmetic of law-makers, and statesmen, and grasping at once the broad principle that man is divine, that he exists here under great spiritual laws, and that it is in vain to reckon up profit and loss, vain to number ships and soldiers, vain to balance parties and interests, while the great duties between man and man, and between man and God, are trodden as an unholy thing in the dust.

In his joyous rambles through the regions of elegant literature and poesy, there are the same tendencies apparent, the same purposes kept in view. "The pretty story-telling Walter Scott," that required no thought to read him, that spoke not to the inner soul of man, that described only the visible, and had no eye for the invisible world, finds but little favor in the stern hands of our spiritualist. The snarling impious Byron, the poet of misanthropy, and earthly passion, is hardly pitied and heartily despised. On the contrary, Burns, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and more than all, Goethe, sing music to his inmost spirit, and seem to revive the long-silent strains of Shakspeare, of Dante, and of Homer.

Much would we say of Carlyle's earnest appeals on the religion of the age, were we not afraid to venture into so fruitful and, we might almost say, so dangerous a subject; but here, too, we find him uttering his lamentations or his anathemas against the hollow-hearted formalism of Christendom, against the *sham*-worship which has taken the place of the undaunted faith and burning love of the prophets and apostles of God. Without distinction of name, of rank, or of popular favor, he tears the mask from the features of hypocrisy, and places again and again, in no very flattering contrast, the pompous, easy, formal, soulless worship that is seen in many a Christian temple, with the Hindoo, the Mohammedan, or even the untutored Indian, who sees God in everything he sees, and hears him in everything he hears. "Will you ever be calling heathenism a lie, worthy of damnation, which leads its devotee to consecrate all upon its altars, and with a wonder, which transcends all your logic, bows before some idol of nature; while those who with sleepy heads and lifeless spirits meet in a framed house, and go over a different set of forms, are the only elect of God? Clear thy mind of cant! Does not God look at the heart?" With a truly Platonic contempt for the material, and as ardent a love for the intellectual, the ideal, the Divine, our author wanders through all the regions of literature, of morals, of religion, of the habits, customs, laws, and institutions of our day, chastising all that is shallow and insincere, and pleading for everything that is earnest and true in human life.

With such tendencies of mind, it is not difficult to see of what nature must be his philosophy. The Scottish metaphysics he *respects* as being in its day a powerful protest against sensationalism; but it is in the German idealism that he finds his true element. There he meets with men who strive to look through the world of phenomena into that of absolute reality; there, at length, he finds the world of matter assigned to its true place of inferior dignity, and the absolute, the real, the essential, the eternal, raised to its lofty position in the contemplation of the intellect, and the affections of the heart.

Had Carlyle, like his German contemporaries, fashioned his philosophy into a system, and sent it into the world all bristling with repulsive words and formulas, he might have been read by a few, and lived and died to the mass unknown. Instead of this, however, he has rushed into every subject of popular interest, cast around his thoughts the drapery of bold poetic imagery, and thus



succeeded in carrying his philosophy into a thousand avenues, which it had otherwise never reached. That he will make many feeble imitators is a matter of certain prediction, nay, already of actual experience; that he will prove a stumbling-block to many sceptical minds, who have an eye for his boldness but no heart for his spiritualism, is equally certain; but, assuredly, we have no writer, who is so adapted to stem the current of empiricism, and to hurl defiance at the noisy and shallow pretensions of the materialistic or sensational systems of the age; none who holds so important a place in the transition, which is now effecting, from the degenerated philosophy of Locke to a new, and, we trust, a rational idealism. For our own part we are thankful that Carlyle has lived, thought, and written; he may scandalize the few, as every bold thinker will, but the world in the end will be the better; it will be a truer and an honester world for his life and his labors. That he should have involved himself in certain aberrations of philosophy and good sense is not to be wondered at. No man ever wrote so earnestly on one side of a question without doing so. Disgusted with formalism, he has shown an inclination to make sincerity the *whole* test of moral greatness. He *tends* to make Paul the persecutor as elevated a hero as Paul the apostle. He *tends* to sink all consideration of the object towards which our zeal is directed, in the glory of the zeal itself. Such a principle, if there be any distinction between truth and untruth in the world, we must learn to repudiate; but let us retain the deep impression of the sentiment he so earnestly labors to inculcate,—that all our outward life is destitute of moral excellence, while the soul does not act with fervor and sincerity and godly fear within.

The influence of Carlyle's writings, and of the German philosophy generally, is already becoming apparent in several different quarters. In America they have operated powerfully, especially upon the numerous body of Unitarian Christians who exist there, turning that system of Christianity, which sprung originally from a sensational philosophy, into a far more profound and a far more spiritualized system of religious rationalism. The same effect is visible, though not to the same extent, in our own country. The influence of the German philosophy is visible among the more deep-thinking of the Unitarians; it is visible in a new and increasing party in the Established Church, that usually denominated Young England; it is visible to a certain degree, even among those reputed to be most rigidly attached to their symbols. There

can be little doubt, indeed, but that theology, without, we trust, giving up any of its distinctive features, is about to be the medium for popularizing and spreading some of the main principles of an idealistic philosophy.

In the meantime, there are some other minor manifestations of sympathy with the present eclectic philosophy of France, springing, too, in some cases, from sources where it was least to be expected. Any one may satisfy himself of this by directing his attention to a series of works published by that promoter of elegant typography, William Pickering, termed "Small books on great subjects." In one of these little treatises, entitled "Philosophical Theories and Philosophical Experience," there is a new psychological classification of our mental phenomena, into—I. Material and Animal Functions, those subjected to bodily changes; and II. Spiritual and Unchanging Functions. In another of them, written by John Barlow, M.A., of the Royal Society, a professed physiologist, there is a deduction of man's spirituality and immortality from the power of the will: in fact, both these treatises are strongly characterized by their giving prominence to the notion and the power of *self*, and assigning it its due place in their metaphysical philosophy. We might mention also, a treatise of Isaac Preston Cory, Esq., on Metaphysical Enquiry, and another on Logic and the Laws of Thought, by Rev. Wm. Thomson, each of which gives a pleasing instance of the growing tendency, which now exists, to the cultivation of the abstract and metaphysical sciences. The latest manifestation of the now rising school of English spiritualism, is to be found in the Hunterian Oration, delivered by J. H. Green, Esq., in February 1847, entitled "Mental Dynamics, or Groundwork of a professional Education." The author has given in the Appendix, a highly interesting classification of the human faculties, and pointed out with great clearness, the principle of self consciousness—of the *me* regarded in the light of subject or noumenon—as the only scientific basis of a true philosophy both of mind and morals. What the hopes of the next generation may be we do not now inquire; but we shall, perhaps, find an opportunity of throwing out a few speculations on this subject, when we come to speak of the *tendencies* of the speculative philosophy of the nineteenth century.

The modern idealism of France might, perhaps, naturally be looked for under this chapter; but, as it has assumed the eclectic form, we reserve it for a separate consideration.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN SCEPTICISM.

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#### SECT. I.—*Modern Scepticism generally—In England.*

THE interest that attends the history of philosophy in any age, will always attach itself mainly to the two opposed schools of sensationalism and idealism. From them originate most of the deeper problems upon which the mind of man delights to dwell, and to their efforts we naturally look, to have those problems clearly solved. It is, however, one of the most universal failings of humanity, to run into extremes in different directions. Hardly is the necessity realized of investigating closely the facts of sensation, than the philosopher, absorbed in this object, and overwhelmed, perhaps, with the variety, magnitude, and number of the phenomena presented, makes sensation the basis of every mental state, and, in the same proportion, disparages the value of all the other faculties.

But the opposite extreme is equally natural. Reason, as all admit, is the noblest part of man, for it regulates and guides all the rest. Once, then, let the metaphysician become wrapped in the contemplation of its grandeur, and he will, in all probability, begin forthwith to detract from the value of the senses, to look with contempt upon empirical knowledge, and thus to lose sight of one, at least, of the most fertile sources of our ideas.

The abuses both of sensationalism and idealism have been, we trust, already sufficiently portrayed. In the former case, we have seen them leading to egotism in morals, atheism in religion, and materialism in philosophy; in the latter case, they have given rise successively to religious rationalism, to fatalism, and ultimately, to complete pantheism. Now the logical deduction of false results in

any philosophical system, always betrays a falsity in one or more of the fundamental data from which they are evolved. The error, it is true, may be invisible ; yet, if such conclusions actually clash with the indisputable facts of daily experience, we may be sure that it is lurking somewhere in the foundations. The mind, indeed, which is totally given up to system, will admit many a startling conclusion, nay, perhaps, many a contradictory one, without any difficulty. Full of confidence in the principles it has adopted, it is borne along with the stream of argument to all their results ; and should insoluble difficulties arise, it leaves them, as points which transcend the powers of the human mind to unravel or to comprehend. There is a limit, however, at which the force of system stops, and beyond which it cannot impose upon human credulity ; and when this limit is arrived at, not only does the mind refuse to advance any further, but, system being once found in error, a flood of suspicion pours itself even over those conclusions which had been heretofore most firmly believed. Such is the origin of scepticism, which, in its first aspect, is really nothing more than the common sense of mankind rising in rebellion against the authority of the current philosophy of the age.

The proper office of scepticism is to act as a check or drag upon the too rapid progress of all dogmatical systems. As such, it has been eminently beneficial in every age ; nay, has formed an indispensable movement in the advancement of speculative science. It dispossesses the mind of man of its excessive love of system, pulls down its blind attachment to authority, and moves out of the path some of the greatest obstacles which oppose the investigation of truth. Never, perhaps, was there a philosophical system more widely diffused, more deeply inwrought into the belief of mankind, and more sternly contended for, than that of Aristotle. The ideal theory of human knowledge, which originated there, was for ages looked upon as possessing authority almost amounting to axiomatic certainty ; and it must have appeared little less than madness to attack a belief so universal, and established, in all appearance, for endless perpetuity. The instrument, however, by which this was overthrown, was the scepticism of Hume. It was he who, regardless of consequences, carried the principles in question to their furthest results, showed that they involved in them universal unbelief, and thus gave them virtually their first refutation. The scepticism of Hume, which may be called a "*reductio ad absurdum*," aimed against the ideal system, necessitated a thorough re-



consideration of the very first elements of human knowledge, and was instrumental in suggesting, both to Kant and to Reid, the primary idea of a philosophy based upon sounder principles.

Had scepticism been content to keep within its proper limits, and quietly to perform the office assigned to it, it would have ever appeared in the light of a friend and benefactor; but, not content with pronouncing the actually existing systems to be in error, it often seeks to advance still further, and affirms that no possible system of philosophy can develop *any truth whatever* with absolute certainty. Here, then, having resisted and exposed the errors of others, it falls itself into the most startling errors of all, and having proffered a blessing with one hand, withdraws it with the other.

Now, in taking a general view of scepticism, we must point out as clearly as possible the different aspects which it assumes, since in doing this we shall be the better able to estimate the amount of influence it is now exerting in our own country. Scepticism, then, regarded generically, may be divided into three subordinate species, which we may term *absolute* scepticism, *authoritative* scepticism, and the scepticism of *ignorance*.

1. By absolute scepticism we mean, a disposition of mind to admit nothing as absolutely true, accompanied with a formal denial of the certainty of any branch of human knowledge. This species of scepticism, in the very nature of things, must be rare, and when it does appear, must be altogether limited to the more thinking classes of mankind. The natural and healthy state of the human mind is one of *belief*. We instinctively give credit to our senses, our memory, our reason, our moral sentiments; and ere distrust in any of them is experienced, a considerable process of thinking and of reasoning must have passed through the intellect. Ordinarily speaking, men have neither the leisure nor the taste to sit down and investigate the foundations of knowledge, and, consequently, they give themselves up, without any hesitation, to their natural and instinctive beliefs. It is only here and there, in men of deep reflection—men who have gone, or imagined that they have gone, to the very bottom of those foundations—that any idea is entertained of the absolute uncertainty of the whole superstructure.

The natural history of this species of scepticism may be briefly portrayed in the following manner. We will suppose a man, vigorous in his natural capacities, earnest in his purposes, and eagerly devoted to the investigation of truth. Too penetrating to be imposed upon by vulgar modes of thinking—too independent to

admit, without testing, the common opinions of those around him—he scatters the faith of his childhood to the winds, and seeks to recast, for his own satisfaction, the primary elements of his real philosophical belief. In doing so, he soon finds himself involved in questions of the most intricate nature. The more easy and superficial problems are spurned with contempt; he wants to go at once to *first principles*, and to convince himself that everything *there* is firm and stable. To his grief and astonishment, however, he finds that those fundamental questions, upon which everything else must rest, are among the most difficult, both of comprehension and of proof. The greatest minds of former ages, he discovers, have in this region perpetually lost their way; and he sees nought in prospect but a conflict of opinions, as endless as it must be unsatisfactory. In his perplexity, he appeals to the great dogmatical systems which have had the chief reputation in the world; he tracks the history of them from Plato down to Kant; and the probable consequence is, that the arguments of the one party completely neutralize those of the other. In this painful position, the fearful question begins to dawn upon his mind,—Is there such a thing as truth at all? Can we have a certainty upon anything? Are we not the sport of an ignorance which dazzles only to delude us with the hope of absolute truth? Such a thought, once entertained, acts like a spell upon all his researches, and throws suspicion over every argument. It gains force from the very fact, that it seems so plainly to unfold the causes from which the contests and disagreements of philosophy have arisen. A disgust at all dogmatism next ensues; and at length he determines to rest in the conviction that each man must see truth for himself alone, because absolute truth lies entirely beyond the reach of the human faculties.

This disposition to universal unbelief, then, being once fixed in the mind, it soon manifests itself upon almost every subject that lies open to human research. It begins, of course, by attacking the ground-principles of philosophical truth,—in one breath denying the certain existence of the material world, and in another, that of the spiritual; thus leaving, ultimately, nought but a bundle of impressions and ideas. Next, it loosens the strong band of moral obligation. Virtue to it is either a nonentity, or but another name for that which produces pleasure; and vice is a similar cipher, except it be that which produces pain; but as to the word *duty*, it has absolutely no meaning, since no *obligation* can be shown why I should pursue happiness as my aim any more than misery. Next,

the foundations of man's natural religion fall under its stroke. Men may have (grants the sceptic) each one for himself, *the idea* of God, and this idea may prove very beneficial in directing or constraining his actions; but who is to prove that objective reality is to be attached to it? In a word, once let confidence be shaken in the veracity of our natural faculties, and there is not a buttress left to support any portion of the edifice of truth.

Now the philosophical error, which lurks in the principle of absolute scepticism, is by no means difficult to discover and expose; in fact, as a system, it carries within itself its own refutation. The sceptic distrusts the veracity of man's natural faculties; but by what means, we would ask him, has he arrived at this, his startling conclusion? Of course, by the *use* of his faculties—the very faculties which he distrusts. But if our reason is ever leading us astray in other matters, and if it *never* suffers us to attain certainty, then why may it not have led the sceptic himself astray? or on what ground can he affirm the certainty of the conclusion to which he has arrived? The sceptic, above all men, is fond of employing the power of reasoning, in order to pull down the systems which exist around him; but if he has already undermined the veracity of reason itself, why does he believe his own arguments? Why not take for granted, that he is as far wrong in pulling down as others may have been in building up? For an absolute sceptic to argue at all is a piece of folly, only second to the folly of those who argue with him. If there is no credence to be given to the working of our intellectual powers, the former, for consistency's sake, might spare himself the trouble of using them against the belief of his neighbors; and the latter might, with equal propriety, avoid the useless task of arguing with one, who professedly has no faith in argument. The sceptic, in fact, writes at once his own defence and his own reply: he may make out the best possible case against his opponents; but then who, of all those whom he convinces of the futility of human reason generally, will be likely to pay any respect to his own application of it? The only rational effect of scepticism, when it is carried to this length, is to throw aside all the weapons of philosophy together, and let the world quietly go on as it does, without either encouragement or restraint. In other words, the influence of it, rationally considered, is equal to *zero*.

If this be the case, then, it might be said, why is it worth while to oppose a sceptical system, which *rationaly* has no influence whatever for good or for evil? We answer, because men will



make an *irrational* use of it, and we wish to cut off the plea which it affords them for doing or thinking what is evil. The mere assertion of sceptical principles in the abstract, is of extremely little consequence, as they exert in this way hardly any perceptible influence upon the conduct of any one; but, unfortunately, there is ever a sufficiency of half-ignorant minds, who, without having depth enough to see the inconclusiveness of scepticism *as a whole*, are very ready to catch at the notion of the universal uncertainty of all human knowledge, and to urge it in opposition to everything that is good or great, whether in religion, morals, or philosophy. Thus the loss of confidence in the powers of the mind soon makes itself felt, more or less, in every department of science; it represses exertion, fosters a contempt for all systematic truth, weakens the ties of moral obligation, and tends to the degeneracy, rather than to any advancement of the human race.

Absolute scepticism, as now explained, has fortunately, at present, no decided representative in this country. Its last great advocate was David Hume, who for a time gave origin and support to a class of petty unbelievers, that without entering into the depth of his argument, much less seeing its self-refutation, learned, notwithstanding, to sneer at evidence and despise truth. This spirit was arrested at least to some extent, by Reid, and others of like views, who combated, step by step, so earnestly for the reality of our knowledge, that a sweeping unbelief has not as yet, during the present century, made its re-appearance in this Island. Many, it is true, are the different faiths now in vogue throughout the community; but amongst these we hardly find one, the principle of which is to have no faith at all. We go on, therefore, to describe—

## 2. The scepticism which bases itself upon *authority*.

It is possible to deny the capability of the human mind to gain absolute knowledge for itself, without denying the fact that such knowledge is actually in our possession. If, *e. g.*, we supposed truth to be infused into us miraculously, we might in this way avoid the sweeping conclusion, that there is no such thing as truth at all cognizable to man, whilst at the same time we might regard the self-acquisition of it as altogether impracticable. Now this exactly describes the opinions of many, who look upon tradition or the Scriptures as the only source of absolute truth, and who, standing upon the platform of revelation, scout at the very notion of philosophy.



The system of opinions to which we now refer, is somewhat of the following kind. Man, whatever he might have been in his first creation, is now naturally blind and foolish; his reason is perverted; his moral nature overturned; and he is thus rendered totally unfit for the great office of acquiring knowledge, with any perfect degree of certainty. Upon this state of helpless darkness the light of revelation dawns; the shadows of ignorance gradually disperse; and a source is opened from which we may at length gain fixed and eternal truth—an acquisition otherwise impossible. Let it be remembered that the question here is by no means, whether or no revelation unfolds to us truths which could not have been attained by us in any other way: this is admitted by all who hold the special inspiration of the Bible. The question is, whether *all moral truth* must be derived from thence, or whether some absolute knowledge cannot be attained by man, quite independent of supernatural assistance. Those who hold revelation to be the only source of certain knowledge to man, would, no doubt, start at being ranked under the title of sceptics, and yet, in truth, this principle contains the germ of a scepticism, under which both religion and philosophy would soon be seen to expire.

Let us weigh this question a little. The human faculties, it is urged, are perverted: there is no confidence to be placed in them: they lead us astray at every step. How then, we ask, can we be ever assured that the revelation, to which we apply for light, is a true one? The veracity of it, as far as our convictions go, *must* rest upon a process of reasoning. We must collect evidence; we must decide what is valid as evidence, and what is not; and then from this we must draw our inference respecting the truth of the revelation itself. What, then, are the instruments by which all these processes are carried on, and by which the ultimate conclusion is at length arrived at? Of course our own reasoning faculties. But these faculties are said to be fallacious: why, then, may they not have failed us in this particular argument? If we cannot trust to their decisions *generally*, what certainty is there in that revelation, upon the truth of which they alone can decide?

The argument becomes still stronger, when we pass from the question of revelation to that of the being of God. Without this truth already established, inspiration is a word without any meaning whatever. But how is it established, except by the inferences of our own reason? To undermine the authority of reason, therefore, is to undermine that of revelation as well; once destroy the

validity of the subjective world within, and there can be no longer a certainty left in any objective reality. The scepticism, therefore, which builds itself up upon authority, is in its nature inconclusive. It holds some truths as absolutely sure; but if it could only expand its own principles to their legitimate extent, it would discover that the knowledge which it allows is no more certain than that which it rejects; nay, that the truth of the one is indissolubly connected with the truth of the other.

Whatever scepticism now exists in England is, we imagine, nearly all of this kind. The philosophic spirit is with us, for the most part, at a low ebb, whilst the religious is developing itself often with great intensity. The effect of this is to depress the value of metaphysical truth, and to hold up that of revelation as altogether independent of it. Our ordinary religious literature abounds in crude assertions of this nature. Many of those who write for the religious public, conscious that they never thought themselves clear upon any of the first principles of truth, suppose that no one else has; conscious that their own reason is inconclusive in its researches, they stamp the whole reason of mankind as equally so; assured that their own knowledge is taken entirely upon trust from tradition or the Scriptures, they suppose that all men must take theirs from the same source. Men who have been brought up to a certain belief, and whose minds have never broken away from the blind, but confiding faith of their infancy, have not, in many instances, the slightest idea of the amount or the kind of evidence, which would be necessary to prove the truth of Christianity to a mind without any faith at all. Their own belief is in no sense whatever the result of evidence, but simply a matter of education; and consequently it is no wonder if they commit mistakes with respect to the *real* evidence upon which such knowledge must ultimately rest. This contempt of philosophy, into which the religious world so frequently falls, we feel convinced, is extremely detrimental to the best interests of religious truth. While it may here and there deter a solitary mind from involving itself in the web of human sophistry, it is, on the contrary, infusing into many other minds strong prejudices against admitting the full claims of revelation, and weakening the evidences of it in the minds of those who do.

It is a fact, not to be disputed, that some of the most enlightened minds of the day have nurtured a secret opposition to the doctrines of Christianity, owing to the intellectual intolerance of its

abettors. And whilst such intolerance lasts, can it possibly be otherwise? Is not every mind *impelled* to the admission of all truth, the evidence of which it has itself thoroughly evolved? Did not the same God, which speaks in revelation, create the powers of the human spirit? and when Christianity is made to contradict and repel the natural results of our own faculties, or the utterances of our moral nature, yea, to deny the certainty of that upon which its own evidence rests, is it to be wondered at, that the prejudices of men should be aroused and their assent refused? We regard the believer, who would raise the value of religion by invalidating the due authority of human reason, as committing an error which in time must prove fatal to his own belief. To mention any particular works, in which this species of scepticism is discoverable, would be a task more invidious than useful; we merely point out the general fact, that such a method of viewing things is but too common in our own country, and shall rest content with having thus briefly, but firmly recorded our protest against it.

3. There is yet a third species of scepticism claiming our attention, to which we have given the name of the "scepticism of ignorance." This is peculiar to the less educated and more unthinking portion of mankind. Men, in general, as we have already remarked, impose a most implicit reliance upon the evidence of their senses and their faculties, which it is almost impossible for anything to shake. But there lie, beyond these, certain other great principles of belief, absolutely necessary to the repose and well-being of the human mind, the confidence in which varies, even amongst the larger masses of mankind, in different ages and in different countries.

Man requires faith in moral obligation, faith in God, faith in immortality; and this faith cannot be shaken without at the same time endangering the very framework of human society. Faith in these great objects, it is true, always forms a constituent part of the *religion* of the age, so that want of belief in them might be termed *religious* scepticism, with which we have at present nothing to do; but so far as unbelief touches the great fundamental principles of *natural* religion, in so far it is, strictly speaking, a philosophical, as well as a religious scepticism. There have been in the history of the world eras of intense faith, as well as eras of general unbelief upon these matters; and it is the latter which we now note down as being characterized by the scepticism of igno-

rance. Current systems of belief (as was the case at the Reformation) will sometimes, from various causes, be shaken to their very centre, and then the community at large, sympathizing in the work of destruction, are apt to go onwards with it, until they have left no temple of faith at all, in which they may worship. The next generation, accordingly, will grow up uneducated in any belief; and, as the consequence of this, there will ensue a scepticism, not arising from any designed rejection of the spiritual faith of humanity, but from actual ignorance of what there is to believe in. Such, to a great extent, is the present state of France, and such a phenomenon, in some few instances, is seen in our own country, amongst those classes in which infidelity has most frequently taken up its abode. Happily, however, the diffusion of religious truth is too general in this country to admit the return (except, indeed, under most extraordinary circumstances) of another age of unbelief in the groundwork of man's natural religious sentiments. Of the three forms of scepticism we have mentioned, it is the second only from which anything is at present to be apprehended. For absolute scepticism we have too *little* philosophy, for the scepticism of ignorance we have too *much* religion; with regard, however, to the scepticism of authority, we cannot conceal our fear, that should the theological odium pursue the spirit of philosophy with the rancor which has too often been experienced, the result must in time prove fatal to the best interests of morality and of religion itself.

## SECT. II.—*Modern Scepticism in France.*

The state of France, philosophically speaking, previous to the Revolution, has been already glanced at in the chapter which traces the history of sensationalism from Bacon down to modern times. We have seen, moreover, in another chapter, the main features, which French philosophy assumed, when the storm of the Revolution had passed away, and the comparative repose of the present century had commenced. The principles of Condillac, to whose writings the philosophic spirit seemed then to revert, we have noticed developing themselves successively in the physiological theories of Cabanis, in the metaphysics of Destutt de Tracy, and in the ethics of Volney.

The triumph of sensationalism, however, was not destined to be



of long duration. Every extravagant and one-sided system contains, in fact, the seeds of its own overthrow, refuting its assumed data by means of the very consequences to which they lead. A striking example of this is seen in the materialism of France. The germ of the modern eclectic philosophy began to appear amongst the very triumphs of the materialistic school; and then commenced the struggle which has now brought about the establishment of the former and the humiliation of the latter. The rise and progress of the eclectic philosophy, however, we have yet to exhibit; our present business is to track the footsteps of those different forms of *scepticism* which have arisen out of the contest.

The sensationalism of France was eminently *irreligious*. It delighted to scoff at all veneration for the Divine, to shock man's deepest sentiments of spiritual duty, and to substitute the indefinite idea of nature for that of the living God. The opponents of sensationalism, in the meantime, taking up another hypothesis, showed many indications of running into the opposite extreme of pantheism; the pantheistic principle being, in fact, equally fatal to the cultivation of an intelligent and efficient theism as the atheistic itself. The natural effect of these results upon many minds must be at once obvious. The utterance of man's natural reason, whether it flow in the sensational or ideal direction, being made to appear in plain contradiction to our indestructible religious sentiments, a distrust of the power of reason naturally followed, and confirmed scepticism, at length, made its appearance on the stage. This scepticism naturally placed itself *in opposition* to the irreligious tendency of the age; and as the other current philosophies seemed to undermine the authority of revelation in favor of reason, it, on the contrary, sought to *substitute* for reason the dictates of revelation. The most decisive philosophical scepticism of France, accordingly, is that which bases itself upon *authority*, and aims at restoring the power and influence of the Church. To this school, then, we must now briefly revert.

The idea of appealing to Divine authority, and bolstering up the weakness of our natural reason by the cultivation of our faith, was widely diffused throughout France in the seventeenth century, by the writings of Huet, Bishop of Avranches. Huet may be regarded philosophically as the type and exemplar of the sceptics to whom we are now referring; and just in like manner as his views came forth from the rival schools of Gassendi and Descartes, so

theirs have come from the similar contest of the materialists and eclectics of the nineteenth century.

The Count Joseph de Maistre (born 1753, died 1821) appears to have been one of the earliest of these modern theologico-philosophical writers—one, too, who, by the liveliness of his style, and the fertility of his fancy, no less than by the gloominess of his opinions, was well adapted to excite the attention, though not perhaps to gain the suffrages, of his countrymen. M. de Maistre, it is true, can hardly be called in strictness a philosophical writer at all, so entirely does the religious element preponderate over the metaphysical; yet, still, the whole tone of his *thinking* was such, as to prepare the way for future speculations, and still more decided attacks upon the validity of our natural faculties. There are three principal works in which he has explained his views upon human society and human life. The first, published in the year 1819, is “On the Authority and Office of the Pope,” the object of which work was to show, that his Holiness is a universal appeal for mankind, not only in spiritual matters, but in social and political also! The second is “On the Gallican Church, in relation to the Sovereign Pontiff.” The third of these works, published posthumously in the year 1821, is entitled “Evenings at St. Petersburg, or Conversations on the Temporal Government of Providence;” and it is here that he has, at once, given his meditations upon some of the most profound problems of human life, and proposed their solution.

The chief design of this work, as the title indicates, is to explain and to vindicate the conduct of Providence in relation to man in the present world. The lot of humanity is to suffer. From this none are exempt, although the wicked may in the long run suffer much more than the virtuous. The cause of this suffering M. de Maistre traces up very consecutively to original sin, taking the orthodox doctrine of the church as his guide throughout the whole discussion. The means by which suffering is to be alleviated, he considers, are *prayer* and *merit*, the one securing us the constant favor of God, the other allowing the supererogatory righteousness of the saints to stand in the place of the deficient righteousness of the sinner. As theology, these sentiments, of course, must stand or fall according to the evidence of a purely authoritative nature, which can be shown for or against them. The deceptiveness which runs through the whole work, *scientifically* speaking, arises from its being tacitly taken for granted, that there can be no valid

philosophy of human nature which does not build itself up upon these foundations of inspired authority.

Far would we be from detracting aught from the inestimable value of revelation, or from denying the light which it casts upon human life ; but it does not follow from the truth or authority of revelation, that our reason must necessarily be weak and delusive in those subjects, which are not exclusively of a religious nature. There is assuredly enough of truth accessible to our minds in the intellectual and moral constitution of man wherewith to erect a system of philosophy, without the aid of revelation ; nay, upon the philosophical accuracy of our knowing faculties depends the value, even of revelation itself, which, like everything else, must be known through their medium. Whilst, therefore, we would willingly allow M. de Maistre, or any one else, the "liberty of prophesying," *i. e.*, of treating and arguing theology, as theology, upon its proper evidence, we cannot for a moment allow their right of intrenching themselves within the authority of the Church, and claiming a complete dictatorship over the philosophical or even the religious belief of mankind.

Such dogmatism it is the more necessary to resist, when we consider the conclusions which are drawn from it. As mankind exists, says our author, in the present world, only by suffering to atone for the sin of the fall, he ought meekly to yield to every misery that is inflicted upon him for that purpose. Amongst other methods of extracting penance, God has appointed human power to restrain the license of the will, and this power, consequently, best answers its purpose when most stringent and severe. The duty of mankind, then, politically, is *abject submission to authority* ; and, as all authority delegated by God centres in the Pope, we must in everything yield implicit obedience to him, whatever he may inflict or command. When sentiments like these are systematically deduced,—sentiments which turn the world into a purgatory, man into a slave, and human life into gloom, it is, assuredly, high time to hold up either to ridicule or to reprobation the intolerant dogmatism in which they are nursed and cradled. Let a religionist dogmatize upon theology, speculatively considered, as much as he will ; but never let him enslave mankind under the yoke, or on the plea of his crude opinions.

M. de Maistre, in addition to the works above mentioned, left also behind him a treatise entitled "*Examen de la Philosophie de Bacon*," which was published in the year 1836. Seldom has a



more trenchant and amusing polemick been carried on, than that which is contained within these two volumes. The author, exasperated against all philosophy, especially that of a sensational tendency, rushes forth against his opponent with an earnestness and a blind determination, which refuses to recognize a single virtue or excellence attaching to the labors of his whole life. Take the following specimen of the satire he pours forth against the much admired style of the English philosopher.

“The style of Bacon,” he remarks, (vol. i. p. 56,) “demonstrates his entire incapacity in all matters of philosophy. His style is, so to speak, material; he only exercises his mind upon forms, masses, and movements. His thought seems, if we may so say, to corporize itself, and to incorporate itself with the objects which alone occupy it. Every abstract expression, every word of the intelligence, which contemplates itself, displeases him. He refers to the schools every idea which does not present him with three dimensions. He has not in all his works a single word which addresses itself to the spirit: that of *nature*, or of essence, for example, chokes him; he would rather say *form*, because he can *see* it. The word prejudice is too subtle for his ear; he will say *idol*, because an idol is a statue of wood, of stone, or of metal, and has a form and a color which one may touch, and which can be placed on a pedestal. Instead then of saying, national prejudices, corporal prejudices, &c.; he will say idols of the forum, idols of the tribe, &c.; and those prejudices which we all more or less derive from character and habitude, he calls idols of the cave; for the interior of man is to him only a humid cavern, and the errors which distil from the vault, form concretions, just like stalactytes which hang from vulgar caverns.”

In the same sweeping style of criticism, combining at the same time many a stern truth with much exaggeration, the author exposes the methods, the aim, the defects, the weaknesses, both of the Baconian science and theology; seeking to elevate his own theological scepticism upon the ruins of all science and all philosophy. Little as we can sympathize in the spirit of the author's system, it is highly interesting to peruse a polemical work of unquestionable ability, which meets the frequent dogmatism of the sensational school with a dogmatism equal to its own; and opposes to the positiveness of positivism, a rough satirical energy, which pays back with fair interest all the ignorant sport which has been celebrated over the cloud-land of idealism.



The tendency shown by M. de Maistre to substitute faith for knowledge, and authority for philosophical investigation, in matters where such a substitution is not admissible, has been still further developed in more modern times by the Abbé de Lamennais. This remarkable writer was born in the year 1780, and must, therefore, have grown up amidst the very storms of the Revolution, with which his country was agitated. Being naturally of a deeply religious tendency of mind, he could not but look with sorrow, and even with bitterness of spirit, upon the almost universal reign of unbelief; and it must have become early a ruling passion of his nature to recall his countrymen back to the exercise of a faith in God and immortality, to which they seemed to have grown insensible.

To aid him in this design, philosophy seemed entirely unavailing. As to sensationalism, it had already banished Deity from the temples erected to his honor, yea, if possible, from the temple of the universe, filled though it be with his own glory. The antagonist system of idealism, with its rationalistic spirit, likewise afforded but little that was satisfactory to an ardent mind, longing to rush with enthusiasm into the great question of human destiny, and to bring man's duty to God with intense earnestness and vivid perspicuity before its contemplation. Resigning, then, all trust in philosophy, he took his stand upon the doctrine of the Catholic Church, and proposed to find there the one principle of truth, from which all veracious human knowledge really proceeds. His work, entitled, "*Essai sur l'Indifférence en Matière de Religion*,"\* was the first to rouse the public attention at once to himself, and to the theme of his passionate interest. It is the production of a mind disgusted with the sensualism and immorality of society, tired of the petty objects which were absorbing the attention of mankind, and longing to gain peace and satisfaction in higher thoughts and nobler feelings. Such a satisfaction he finds in religion as held by the Church in all ages; and, therefore, neglecting every other avenue of knowledge as vain and fruitless, he will have this to be

\* This work was first published about the year 1820, and has since gone through eight editions. The first part gives a classification of the different systems of religious indifference, and elaborately refutes them. The second part treats of the importance of religion in relation to the individual, to the state, and to God. The third part discusses the *method* of discovering the true religion; and the fourth proves this to be none other than Christianity. The whole work ends with a defence of the principles propounded against objectors; treating of the uncertainty of all philosophical research, and showing the only ground of certitude in the attainment of truth, that, namely, of Catholicism.

the one great and sole channel, through which God has communicated truth to his creatures below.

In order to establish this principle, the first requisite was, if possible, to *destroy* the confidence of humanity in philosophy, of whatever kind; and thus to compel them to take refuge in the ark of faith, against the universal deluge of absolute scepticism. He had to found, consequently, a philosophical scepticism, in order to establish the full authority of his theological dogmas. The scepticism which M. de Lamennais, with this object in view, maintained, if not profound, nevertheless is such as will be always sure to find a response in many minds.\* His spirit of combined mysticism and misanthropy; his restless weariness at the delusive glare of human things; his contempt for the errors, the failings, the follies of mankind; his disappointment over the frailty of his own cherished hopes; all these will ever touch a chord of sympathy in many a heart which has struggled through the same experience, and arrived, perhaps, at the same results.

"What philosophy is there," he exclaims, (we quote from one of his own critics, M. Damiron,) "whose pretensions are not all uncertain—all false? The senses deceive us, and attest nothing that can be termed clear, positive, complete. Feeling is not more sure; its object, although in appearance more evident and more simple, still, unless we are on our guard, is nothing less than a continual series of doubts and illusions. As to reason, it is to be still more suspected; for, first of all, it only operates upon the data furnished by the senses, or the feelings, (data upon which it cannot count); and, secondly, when the data are at hand, how does it operate? and what guarantee have we of the legitimacy of its procedure? What are we to think of the contradictory conclusions which it draws from the same principle? what of the identical ones it draws from different principles? What truth has it not denied? what error has it not established? In a word, must it not associate memory with all its operations?—and is memory a faithful ally? Reason, feeling, sense!—faculties without control!—vain means of gaining knowledge!—principles of error and incertitude! These it is, which deprive man of all hope of having either knowledge or faith from himself; there is for him no reality, either within or without; there is nothing, up to the very truth of his own existence, in which he has any right to believe, unless he has some other

\* To gain a complete view of the author's scepticism, consult especially Part 3, chap. i. "Du fondement de la certitude." Also, his "Défense de l'Essai sur l'Indifférence," at the close of the fourth part.

reason than his own private sentiment, and his own individual consciousness."

M. de Lamennais, we thus see, has himself exactly fallen into the error, against which Plato makes Socrates affectionately warn his friends, in the conversation before his death. "Is it not lamentable, O Phædo," he says, "that when there is such a thing as true and valid reasons, capable of being comprehended, any one, from meeting with other reasons, some of which appear to be true, and some not, should fail to lay the blame upon his own unskilfulness, but at last should delight to thrust the error from his own shoulders upon reasoning itself, pass the rest of his life in hatred and contempt of it, and thus be deprived of the truth and knowledge that he seeks?"

It will not be necessary here to repeat the arguments by which this sweeping procedure of scepticism is met and refuted. We have already shown, that all absolute unbelief in the human faculties is answered by the very principle which it attempts to establish. If our senses and feelings, our memory, our reason, all are delusive, then every system of philosophy is placed *hors de combat*, and the reasoning which has established scepticism itself, may be just as erroneous as any other. Against all pretended unbelief of this kind, the common sense of mankind protests. That we may fall into many errors and many delusions through false reasoning, is unquestionable; but there are some points of knowledge, in which we feel that error is impossible. Here mankind have ever taken their stand; and equally vain is the attempt to shake the confidence of humanity in that which bears the marks of necessity and universality, as it is to inspire a fear least the solid basis of the everlasting mountains should crumble beneath our feet.

M. de Lamennais, however, having begun by establishing a philosophical scepticism, does not purpose, by any means, to leave us in doubt and perplexity as to what is true, and what false; on the contrary, he goes on to expound a theory of human knowledge, by which we may arrive at certainty upon all the great questions of human interest. The theory in question is that of *authority*—a theory which we must now attempt briefly to explain.\*

Man having no criterion of truth within himself *as an individual*, must find one in the universal assent of the whole race. The principle, "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ad omnibus," taken

\* The principle of authority is advocated in different points of view, throughout the whole work. The chief passages in which it is maintained or illustrated, will be found in Part iii., chaps. 1, 3, 5, 8, and Part iv., chaps. 10, 12, 14, 16.



in its widest acceptation, gives us the sole test of what is most assuredly true. This principle being settled, the next question is, *where* and *how* such universal assent is to be found. Opinions on all ordinary subjects within the range of human contemplation, have been perpetually changing. There have been different views advocated in art, in science, in philosophy, in almost every department of general knowledge; so that it is vain to look for common consent, and consequently, for absolute truth, in any of these directions.

In religion, however, the case is different. Here there has been really but one system among the enlightened of mankind, from the earliest ages of the world to the present time. Revealed at three different epochs, it has not changed its essence in passing from one age into another, but only varied its form. The religion of the Patriarch, of the Jew, of the Christian, is really one and the same; and the truth which it contains has gradually been developing itself with greater clearness from one dispensation to another. The existence of false religion is no obstacle against this view of the case. False religion is simply a defective view of truth; while true religion, amidst all its various developments, and all its corruptions, has ever retained its fundamental unity. Here, therefore, we are to look in order to find **THE TRUTH**—that, namely, which rests upon the authority of the whole world, from its creation to the present hour, and which proceeded originally from the direct intervention of God himself.\*

Now the depository of truth, which was formerly vested in the patriarch, and in the Jewish priest, in the present day is vested in the Catholic Church. This is the receptacle of the universal consent of mankind; this has preserved it in its purity; this can boast the sole authority from God, both to expound it and to enforce it upon our attention; and the man, therefore, who abandons the Church of Rome, necessarily plunges into an abyss of error, both as it regards religion and everything else besides.† Such being the case, it is the duty of every state in the world (as the guardian of the best interests of the subject) to support, by every possible means, that one Church, and that one doctrine, which alone can give stability and peace to society; to punish any dissent from it as a crime against human happiness; and to give implicit obedience to the popedom, as the living concentration of universal consent, the sole guide and arbitrator of human reason. Such is

\* Part iv., chaps. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

† Part iv., chaps. 2, 14, 16.



the extraordinary system which M. de Lamennais has propounded and supported with a learning, power, and eloquence, which raises him to the very summit of the living writers of France.

It is the learning and eloquence, however, we imagine, which abound in the work now before us, rather than the soundness of its arguments, to which it owes all its popularity and success. The principle of authority, put forward as it is in the light of a philosophical, rather than a theological dogma, and stripped of its imposing dress, will hardly bear the test of a moment's close investigation. Put in plain language, it comes just to this—listen not to yourselves, but to those who are worthy of your confidence, and remember that neither you nor they are able, *individually*, to know for certain anything whatever, whether it rest upon reason or experience.\*

The Abbé, perhaps, did not perceive that in undermining the authority of the human faculties, he virtually undermined every other. Admitting that there are persons who are in possession of truth, *they* must have received it from some who went before them; they again from the generation before that; and so on, till we come back to the mind which received the truth directly from God. But these first recipients must have used their own faculties; they must have recorded their own impressions, obtained either through sense, reason, or feeling; and they must have transmitted them through the medium of other minds. If these faculties, therefore, are so weak, wavering, and deceptive, as our author supposes, what guarantee have we that they have either appreciated or transmitted truth with faultless accuracy? Must not tradition be corrupted by the very channel through which it has flowed?

Or, to put the subject in another point of view, let us suppose the Abbé himself in the act of seeking for truth *previous* to the time when he had found the sole fountain, out of which, as he affirms, it can be obtained. How, we would ask, did he come to the conclusion that we must fall back upon authority? How did he prove satisfactorily to his own mind, that the source and centre of authority is in the Catholic Church? Did he not read, and search, and argue, and meditate? Has he not written whole volumes of controversy on the subject, to persuade men to adopt his opinion? But, on his own principle, what is the value of all this argument? Does not *his* reason totter and err, as well as that of other people? and has he not, in fact, followed his own private, and, consequently,

\* Damiron, "Histoire de Phil." Vol. i. p. 269.

fallible judgment, in choosing to yield himself to the supreme direction of his spiritual head?

In matter of fact, private judgment *must* be exercised, whether we will or not. We come into God's world without any mark upon our spirits to tell us where we are to find the truth, and it is equally a matter of private opinion, whether we determine to work out our own system of religious belief for ourselves, or whether we determine to yield to the authority of others. If reason, therefore, be invalid, this very determination which it makes, to resign itself into the hands of authority, may be an erroneous judgment. In short, if the validity of reason be once destroyed, nothing—not even revelation (which must be received through its medium) can save us from universal scepticism; that is, a universal "*reductio ad absurdum*."

That our reasoning here is correct, the subsequent conduct of M. de Lamennais himself has given the best possible proof. At the breaking out of the Revolution of 1830, he began to advocate the complete independence of the clergy, and to argue that, as they were in allegiance to another and a superior power, they ought to have nothing whatever to do with the temporal government. This doctrine was opposed at the same time by the clergy and the pope. In 1834, he published a small work, entitled, "*Paroles d'un Croyant*," the object of which was to advocate pure democracy on the principles of the New Testament; a theory which was so unpalatable in the same quarters, that the work itself was publicly condemned.\* Baffled and spurned by the supreme authority, which he had formerly represented as the very concentration of truth, he had nothing left but to declare against it, to commit the crime which he had before held up to reprobation, and to afford another proof that those who pretend to submit most implicitly to authority, are actually, in doing so, equally following their own private judgment, and quite as ready to exercise it, as all other men are, whenever the occasion may require.†

\* This work has been recently translated into English, by Rev. E. S. Pryce, B.A.

† In his little treatise, entitled "*Livre du Peuple*," he rejects all political authority whatever, except that which springs from the mass.

# DIGRESSION ON M. DE LAMENNAIS' "ESQUISSE D'UNE PHILOSOPHIE."

IN the former edition, I made no mention of this last and chief work of M. de Lamennais, since it could not be reckoned in any sense as belonging to the philosophy of scepticism; I have thought it, however, that some account of the conversion of a great and brilliant mind from the principle of authority as attached to human *testimony*, to the principle of authority as attached to human *reason*, might be both interesting and instructive. The work above mentioned, purports to consist of no less than six volumes. The first three appeared in the year 1840, the fourth in 1846, and the two last have still to be expected.\* The system, however, so far as it goes, is complete; and we shall find little difficulty in giving a tolerably accurate view of the principles on which the whole is founded.

With regard to the *idea* of philosophy, the author has taken a comprehensive, and, as it appears to us, a perfectly correct definition of it. Instead of confining it within the narrow limits either of psychology, or of mere formal and abstract thought, he rises to the full conception of a fundamental science, which embraces all existence in its ample grasp. "Philosophy," he says, "is the effort of the human reason to conceive all things, together with the product of that effort. In this respect, it embraces all sciences, and the developments of all sciences; as also the relations which unite them. It assembles and combines all primary truths, as the primitive facts on which alone it is able to operate, (because the human understanding includes nothing anterior) carries them up to causes and principles, which the mind can grasp; deduces from them their consequences, and seeks to combine them in a theory, which comprehends the universality of things and their laws."†

With regard to the *method* of philosophy, the Abbé has passed, as we just hinted, from the principles of faith in testimony, to faith in the primitive beliefs of mankind. The individual mind he still thinks incapable of founding a valid philosophy, as it can only expound its own individual views of things; but there are certain *foundation truths* which all mankind admit: on these we must take our stand, and on them erect a system of pure scientific knowledge. "The True for man," he remarks,‡ "is that in which the human reason acquiesces. If we understand by the human reason, the reason of the generality of men, or the common reason, then all *successive* variation, and all *simultaneous* opposition disappears. The true is no longer determined by the passing state of an individual intelligence; but it is the *constant universal* state of intelligences of the same order. It is that to which the common reason adheres always, and everywhere; that which is invariable like the nature of the beings themselves; and every one from thence has an invariable rule for his thoughts and judgments, an immutable law of affirmation." This method, it will be seen, is nearly identical with Reid's principle of "common sense."

Philosophy, then, starting from this common ground, has three questions to solve:—1. Does anything exist? 2. How does anything exist? 3. Why does anything exist? The solution of these questions comprehends the whole sum and substance of philosophical inquiry. In answering the first of these three questions, it is vain to look for any *proof*, or at least any demonstration of existence. Existence is a primitive fact; it comes to us spontaneously, irresistibly; it is received by all mankind on a pure and undoubted faith. We *know* that there is such a thing as being *per se*, and we know that there is such a thing as being *per alium*; in other words, we have an indestructible belief in the infinite Being, and in the dependent universe. To deny either of these, would imply a palpable contradiction of the very first elements of our consciousness.§ The primary object of philosophy, then, is to investigate the nature and relations of God and the universe.

The first book treats of God. Respecting the existence of the Divine being, we need no proof: the negation of him would be the negation of all being. In contemplating, then, the Divine existence, we find, from whatever point of view it be regarded, that it comprehends three great and essential *attributes*. The first is that of *power* or *force*; for all existence implies a divine energy. The second is *intelligence*; for without intelligence, no *formal* creation could have taken place. The third is *love*, which unites the

\* The fifth has just now appeared.  
† Vol. i. p. 9.

‡ Vol. i. p. 20.  
§ Vol. i. p. 23, *et seq.*



divine power with the divine intelligence, and completes the perfection of the supreme nature.

These three determinations appear in Scripture under the ideas of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; and all existence will be seen to flow by regular and divine laws from these eternal distinctions in the very nature of Deity itself.\*

The knowledge of God, then, is the basis of all philosophy. Let the eye of the soul gaze steadfastly upon the divine nature; let us become deeply imbued with the distinctions of the infinite power, intelligence, and love, and we have the key to the comprehension of all the mysteries of being throughout the universe at large.†

Having contemplated the nature of God, the author next approaches the philosophy of *creation*. On this point, several different theories have existed. Some considering it absurd to suppose anything to exist beyond infinite *being* itself, have regarded the universe simply as *phenomenal*; everything, as far as it possesses any reality, being only a modification of the divine essence. This is pantheism.

Others again, to alleviate the difficulty, have maintained the existence of two external principles; this is the scheme of *dualism*. A third party have explained the act of creation, as being the veritable production of something, which had no kind of existence before, out of nothing; an hypothesis which implies that there is a greater sum of being in the universe *now* than there was originally, and consequently that the original self-existent being was not *infinite*. All of these theories contain a portion of truth, but not the whole. What is true in the first is, that there can be only *one* infinite substance. What is true in the second is, that the universe is not a pure phenomenon, a mode of the divine. What is true in the third is, that created things do not belong purely and essentially to the divine nature, but exist *out of* God.‡

To deduce the finite from the infinite by a regular process of thinking, the author considers impossible. Both are given as primary elements of our knowledge—their co-existence is a mystery; and yet there can be no reason shown why the same substance may not subsist in two different states, the one finite the other infinite; although the full comprehension of the method by which this is effectuated, is the central point of philosophical truth, which we can never fully understand.§

There are some points in the philosophy of creation, however, which we *can* understand. We know that the infinite being must have contained in himself the *exemplars* of all finite and particular beings, what Plato called the divine ideas. We know that as Deity is infinite power, intelligence, and love, these three principles must have concurred in the act of creation, for nothing could have existed without *form*, nor could that form be brought into being without a *power* to effect it; nor could the form and the force result in any product without their co-operation by a principle of attraction or love. To create, therefore, is to realize *without*, that which first existed *within* the Divine understanding,—and when we have fully explored this truth, we have done all which philosophy *can* do to explain the mystery of *creation*.||

What idea, then, must we attach to the *material* world? If everything is but the realization of the divine ideas, what is matter? To this the Abbé replies, that the idea of matter is purely *negative*. The only *positive* existence is power, intelligence, and love; but these must be *limited*, in order to become finite realities; and the limitation is, in fact, *all* that we mean by matter. "Pure matter exists not; its very idea is a contradiction. The existence of a thing which limits, implies that of a thing limited; every body then is *complex*. Whatever degree it occupies in the scale of being, that which constitutes it a determinate being, in a word, that which there is of *positive* in it distinct from matter, is simply that which is *limited by matter*. Of the two elements of which it is composed, (the limiting and the limited,) the one expresses that which *is*, the other that which is *not*—namely, the limit in space, the circumscription of its own nature."¶ The mode of creature existence, in fact, borrows everything there is *real* in it, from the mode of the divine existence. But in the divine existence there is neither *time*, *space*, nor *motion*; hence, *time*, *space*, and *motion*, as modes of our existence, are *negative*. What is time? The limit of eternity. What is space? The limit of immensity. What is motion? The limit of omnipresence.\*\* Such is the explanation of the truth—"In him we live, and move, and have our being."

Having discussed the philosophy of creation, the author next proceeds to explain further the nature of the universe, (Book iii.) The sources from which all our conjectures on the formation of the universe may be drawn, are twofold. First of all, we must appeal to science. The conclusions of Astronomy and of Geology must be marshalled, and all the light must be thrown upon the subject which diligence and perseverance can bring together in a focus. The results of science must next be placed side by side with the conclusions of our higher speculative thinking; and from the aid they mutu-

\* Vol. i. p. 43, *et seq.*

|| Book ii. chap. 1, *passim*.

† Vol. i. p. 91.

¶ Vol. i. p. 129.

‡ Vol. i. p. 111.

§ Vol. i. p. 196.

\*\* Ibid. p. 133.



ally lend to each other, we must ground our views on the true philosophy of the universe. Observation and reason, according to M. de Lamennais, both combine to show us, that the universe consists of certain manifestations of power, of intelligence, and of love; that the very qualities which philosophy *first* shows to be inherent in the Divine being, are found by experience to form the basis of all the phenomena which the whole of creation alike presents.\* Pursuing this course of investigation, the author traces the manifestations of *force* or power through the laws of inorganic matter, through the various gradations of organic existence, and in the phenomena of mind. From thence, he proceeds to trace in the same way the various manifestations of intelligence; and, lastly, to exhibit the great attractive principle, which in its various forms is but the diversified manifestation of *love*.†

Having expounded, at some length, the laws of force, of intelligence, and of love in the universe, the author now proceeds (Book iv.) to a separate consideration of the different orders of created existences, which are divided by him into the inorganic, the organic, and the intelligent.

First, inorganic substances have a participation in all three of the primary attributes of the infinite Being, but partake *predominantly* of the attributes of *force*. The action of force is always considered the *primary*, hence the world is represented in its primary state, as a *chaos*, with little manifestation of *form* (intelligence) or of vitality (love.) On this part of the universe, the marks of *limitation* and *isolation* are most strongly impressed. Each atom exists only *for itself*, floating without any fixed relation in the universal blank.‡

Secondly, that which characterizes organic substances, is a vital unity, in which extreme limitation ceases to predominate, and a spontaneous internal principle of union and co-operation is evinced. This, with some individual differences, forms the main peculiarity both of vegetable and animal existence. Lastly, intelligent beings are those in which power, intelligence, and love attain their purer form and higher intensity. Here the laws of mere sensibility and instinct give way to those of reason and will; and just in proportion as these higher laws are disowned, does man sink back into the lower state of mere animal existence.

The two last books of this first division of philosophy, relate to the general laws of creation, viewed in relation to the essential properties of being. We cannot follow the author particularly through these somewhat intricate researches; we simply point out the fact, that he has entered into a complete discussion of the general laws of bare matter, of organism, and of mind; that he has compared these laws with the original properties of being, and deduced from thence a connected exposition of the principles of life, organic and intelligent, of reproduction and of conservation;—in a word, that from the primary ideas of force, intelligence, and love, he has sought to cast a light upon *all* the processes of nature, and all the mysteries of being. Having shown that the end of all creation is the manifestation of God, the author professes to have answered the three questions he at first proposed,—to have shown *what* there is,—*how* it is,—and *why*.

The fundamental branch of philosophy being thus completed, we have to look around for its applications. “The general principles we have expounded,” he remarks, “develop themselves on all sides into a multitude of consequences; so that, from the primitive elements of the world, proceed successively the different series of beings which mark the phases of its development. We ought now to follow these consequences into their principal branches, and consider more in detail the inexhaustible wonders of creative power. And as, out of all beings known to us, *man* is the most elevated; as in his form, at the same time one and complex, he combines all inferior existences; it is upon *him* that we must next fix our attention.”§

The second division of philosophy then relates to *man*. The general laws of all intelligent existence have been already deduced. The first great peculiarity, then, which we find in human nature, when regarded in its individuality, is the *existence of evil*. This is a mystery which all great systems of philosophy have sought to solve, and to this we must accordingly look as a great fact, lying at the very centre of our constitution. To explain the mystery of moral evil, (for all evil has its root here,) we must consider the nature of the creature in relation to the Creator. “Creation implies, in every being, the co-existence of two principles; the one is that which, uniting it to the infinite, is the root of its very existence,—its primitive and fundamental condition; the other is that, which, as constituting its proper individuality, tends to separate it from the infinite—from God.”

There are, therefore, two tendencies in the creature, the one towards *God*, the other towards the *individual*,—towards *self*; and the harmonious co-operation, or if we may

\* Vol. i. p. 152, &c.

† Book iv. chaps. 2, 3.

‡ Book ii. chaps. 4, 5, 6.

§ Vol. i. p. 409.

term it so, the equilibrium of these two tendencies, is the proper mode of existence for created intelligence. Minds, however, by virtue of their freedom, have the power to disturb this equilibrium, to violate the law of unity, and to give preponderance to the law of separation. This isolation of the individual from the infinite, is the root, nay, is the very essence of all evil. Sin can be regarded, therefore, simply in a negative point of view; it is the *limitation* of a soul from its communion with Deity; and is, in fact, the necessary *possibility* of a finite creature. Thus, however baneful to the subject, yet evil does not introduce a single element of *positive* disorder into the universe regarded as the realization of the Divine ideas. God is not the author of evil, for a negation cannot be created. The great business of man as a moral agent, is to struggle against this limitation, to develop that intelligence which lifts him anew to the intuition of God, and to foster that love which attracts the soul back to its infinite source.\*

To come back, however, to the closer consideration of man in his distinctive nature, there are two points of view in which he must be contemplated. 1. As an organic being; and 2, as a being of intelligence and freedom. On M. de Lamennais' theory of organization, nutrition, reproduction, life, sleep, death, &c., we shall not dwell, as it involves too many particulars to be compressed into a brief sketch like the present; and, though highly interesting, is rather an *application* than a necessary part of his philosophy. We pass on, therefore, to the theory and analysis of the human mind. Mind is *intelligent*; and to be intelligent, means, to perceive God; that is, not only to communicate with the lower world by sense and instinct, like the brutes, but to rise to the perception of pure, abstract, and eternal *ideas*. The light of *human* intelligence must emanate from the *Divine* intelligence, and consequently man has intellect only by virtue of his relation to the *Eternal World*. The knowledge of the *true* again produces love—the aspiration of the soul after truth; and this love—this aspiration—man possesses by virtue of his connection with the Divine love—the *Spirit*. Knowledge and love together determine and give impulse to our *action*, and this action emanating from the will is derived from our participation of the divine *power*—the *causa causarum*. These faculties, however, exist in a veritable *being*, which itself partakes of the divine substance, and the consciousness of this *unity* is the essence of personality—the idea of self.

To begin with the theory of *intelligence*. This we see is now reduced to the discovery of man's relation with the *word*—the Divine intelligence. Psychology, then, cannot be the starting point in philosophy, as it was made by Descartes and Kant; we must *begin* with *ontology*—with the intuition of the Infinite, and from thence alone can we come down to the proper comprehension of *mind*.

Intelligence, we find, is of two kinds, passive and active. When the light of the Infinite flows in upon the mind, and *faith* goes forth to embrace it, the whole process is, on our part, purely spontaneous. On the other hand, our reflective knowledge is derived from our own designed activity; we *compare, judge, reason*, and thus arrive at the truth by another and more laborious route. The human intellect, therefore, may be viewed in two relations, one relative to truth itself—the other to the individual which perceives the *true*. Hence, also, two orders of intellectual laws, those of intuition, and those of logical thinking.†

In accordance with what has just been established, the human faculties which refer to understanding must be divided into *active* and *passive*. The *passive* faculties are *two*. 1. The consciousness of perceptions or intuitions spontaneously received; and 2, *memory*, which produces the sentiment of personal identity. The active faculties are all grounded in the power of *attention*; that primary act in which the intellectual activity of the *me* manifests itself. Of the complex operations, the first and most simple is comparison; the next is reasoning, which consists in the comparison of an indefinite number of terms; the third is imagination, the province of which is to effect a union between our sensations and ideas, to *image* the spiritual. The expansion of these faculties gives us the whole phenomena of our intellectual life.‡

We come next to the theory of the emotions. These all result from the relation in which we stand to the *Divine love*—the spirit.

As there are two kinds of intelligence, the pure and the individual, so there are two kinds of love—that related to the organic or sensitive man, and that related to the higher or spiritual man. From these result all the action and counteraction of the lower and higher affections;—the conflict of the flesh with the spirit.

Lastly, the theory of the will, results from the relation in which we stand to the divine *power*. Here we have the exposition of human liberty, and see the laws of human action evolved in connection with those of intelligence and love. And thus the author succeeds by the deductive method of founding a psychology which agrees in every re-

\* Vol. ii. book i. chaps. 7, 8.

† Vol. ii. p. 214, &c.

‡ Vol. ii. book iii. chaps. 5, 9

spect with the classification, to which the chief inductive systems of the present age have arrived.

The third volume of the work before us, treats of the various branches of human activity ; — the industrial arts — architecture — painting — sculpture — music — poetry — oratory, with the general theory of the beautiful.

The fourth volume treats of *science*, in which the author, passing through the different branches of natural philosophy and physiology, shows how they all harmonize with the principles he has established in his fundamental inquiries. Thus terminates the science of *man* in his individual capacity. The two remaining volumes are intended to discuss the philosophy of *history*, and the doctrine of human society ; and when this is completed, we shall have the sketch of a philosophy, which, however its truth be adjudged, none can deny to present a noble monument of the highest philosophical genius and power.

As an effort of inventive thinking and logical deduction, the philosophy we have been examining is doubtless inferior to the principal German systems, to which it probably owes much of its depth. But what it fails in point of originality, is amply repaid us in point of style. M. de Lamennais is reckoned among the very first masters of prose composition, and no exposition we could give of his ideas can convey the least conception of the perspicuity, the brilliancy, even the sublimity, with which he threads his way through the lofty regions of thought which he essays to track. Taken as a whole, we know of few modern attempts to unite the whole mass of human knowledge in one connected affiliation of ideas, which has greater claims upon the attention of every philosophical, and, we may even add, of every earnest and religious mind. Much there will, doubtless, be to reject, but strange indeed will it be, if in such a mass of deep and oft-times devotional thinking, we do not gather some precious germs of truth, which will far more than repay the labor which may be expended upon it.

There are several other works besides those we have already mentioned, which might be discussed in connection with the school of philosophical scepticism grounding itself on authority ; of these, however, we shall hardly do more than mention the authors, since in them all the *principle*, metaphysically considered, is the same. The Vicomte de Bonald, born 1762, died 1840, one of those to whom we refer, is usually esteemed a clever and elegant metaphysical writer, but withal there is an air of sophistry and insincerity, which much detracts from the value of his writings, and creates suspicion, even where perhaps there may be no cause for it. His principal philosophical work is entitled, "*Recherches Philosophiques, sur les premiers objets des Connaissances Morales.*" (Paris, 1838.) The first chapter takes a rapid glance at the history of philosophy, holding up to view the ocean of uncertainty and contradiction in which all the various systems have been involved. Having made the best of this disagreement, he seeks for some *one* plain and palpable fact, as the absolute foundation of our knowledge ; and finds this one fact in the gift of language.\* The second chap-

\* " Il s'agiroit donc de trouver un fait, un fait sensible et extérieur, un fait absolument primitif et à priori, pour parler avec l'école, absolument général, absolument évident, absolument perpétuel dans ses effets ; un fait commun, et même usuel, qui pût servir de base à nos connaissances, de principes à nos raisonnements, de point fixe de départ, de *criterium* enfin de la vérité. \* \* \* Ce fait est le don primitif et nécessaire du langage."—Rech. Phil., p. 86.



ter treats of the origin of language ; and the third of the origin of writing. The four other chapters which complete the first volume, establish the true definition of *man*, as "*intelligence servie par des organes*," enter into a brief analysis of *thought*, in opposition to the ideologists ; and treat at some length the question of the expression of our ideas. The second volume establishes the immateriality of the soul, discourses of primary, secondary, and final causes, and ends by drawing general conclusions from the whole inquiry.

The theory then which M. de Bonald advocates respecting the origin of human knowledge is this :—That man when created must have been furnished by God with a perfectly formed language (to prove which he enters into a great variety of arguments.) That, words being the signs of ideas, there must have been communicated with the primitive language a considerable stock of notions, which form, to the present day, the nucleus to all our knowledge, and which have been transmitted by the use of language unimpaired from one generation to another. That it is vain to seek for absolute knowledge from our own consciousness, from the efforts of our reason, or from our moral nature ; but that we must find it, if at all, in the relics of those primitive and divinely communicated notions, which have come down traditionally from age to age, and which are preserved, and as it were stereotyped, in the various languages of mankind.\*

That there is somewhat of ingenuity in the theory before us, and much art in working it up to an appearance of probability, may be readily admitted ; but there are two considerations especially which deprive it at once of much of its value. First, it cannot be demonstrated that there was any primitive language at all, beyond the natural propensity implanted in the human mind, to embody its thoughts in external signs. To most minds, indeed, the latter hypothesis is by far the more probable and simple. Again, if we are to study truth from the words in which it is expressed, we must remember, that those words have ideas answering to them ; so that after all it is to the human reason or consciousness we must look as the source from which everything proceeds, and which makes words themselves the fixed representatives of thought. If it should be replied, that the first thoughts of the mind must have been divinely inspired, then the whole question is removed from the platform on which it was before argued, and merges into

\* See chaps. i. and ii.



the higher discussion respecting the origin of our ideas. Taking up the matter in this point of view, we think that our author's eloquence would hardly serve him to make the whole theory appear in quite so plausible a light.\*

Another variation of the principle of authority comes before us in the works of the Abbé Bautain. A compendium of his philosophical opinions was published in a small tractate in the year 1833; this treatise has since been republished as a preliminary discourse to his "Psychologie Expérimentale," (1839); to which has since been added another work, entitled "Philosophie Morale," (1842).

The Abbé commences by mourning the present state of intellectual disorganization and scepticism, which prevails throughout society in his native country. In order to revive the belief of the people in all the great truths which lie at the basis of human happiness, he affirms that we must have recourse to *philosophy*, not indeed as a *source*, but as a guide to the source where truth alone can be found.

To what philosophy, then, must we apply as most capable of taking us under its guidance? This question leads our author to take a rapid glance at the different schools at present in vogue amongst the French academic institutions. The teaching of the *universities* is divided between *three* systems:—1. The sensationalism of Condillac; 2. The psychology of Scotland; and, 3. The modern eclecticism of Paris. With regard to the philosophy of Condillac, this he considers is already virtually defunct; its utter impotence to develop any other than the most shallow and useless truths, has been well nigh universally acknowledged. To the psychology of Scotland somewhat more honor must be assigned; but this also stops short before all the most important and significant problems, and declares them *incapable of solution*. Lastly, the eclectic philosophy, though brilliant in its first appearance, and profuse in its promises, yet altogether fails of rendering us any criterion for the recognition of absolute truth, and leads ultimately into the abyss of pantheism.

In the theological seminaries of France, *two* philosophical methods are recognized; that of the scholastic rationalism, and that of common sense. The scholastic system is a bare logical formalism,

\* The other two principal works of this author, the "Législation Primitive," and the "Mélanges Littéraires, Politiques et Philosophiques," treat almost entirely of political and æconomic questions. For an account of Bonald's literary life, see "Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques," *in loco*.

which ought to have been defunct three centuries ago. The principle of common sense, on the other hand, requires some little consideration. By this, M. Bautain intends to signify all those systems of philosophy which essay to build themselves upon the universal testimony of mankind. It is more particularly in reference to M. de Lamennais that he has contested this principle. The doctrine of authority, which that brilliant writer has propounded, as resting upon the catholic testimony of mankind, he considers to be hampered with the greatest absurdity, and the most palpable contradictions. The theory, he shows, comes to this, that although the individual reason is fallible, yet by the combination of an indefinite number of fallible minds, we may at length attain to a principle of infallibility. M. Bautain, having thus cleared all the other systems of the country out of his way, next propounds his own doctrine, namely, that all infallible truth comes from *God*; that the *word* is the sole source to which we have to look; that here alone we gain a fixed point to rest upon, one which lies entirely without the perpetual oscillations of human opinion. Still philosophy is not to be rejected. It has once led the mind of man away *from* the truth, by its false pretensions: now it has to make reparation by leading him back *to* the only source where eternal truth can be found. The problem of philosophy, therefore, in the present day, is to prove the *necessity* of a revelation, and show how all human efforts terminate there, as in their last resting place, their final goal.\*

With this purpose in view, the author has entered with great learning and acuteness into the question of psychology and of morals. Although he rests all ultimate certitude upon divine authority, yet he gives a wide and a glorious scope for philosophy, in constituting it the handmaid of revelation, the *παιδαγωγος*, by which we are to be conducted into the higher spheres of truth. We see not, indeed, (with some adjustments respecting the primary grounds of certainty in matters of philosophy,) any obstacle against our forming a coalition with the principle here enunciated, namely, that philosophy is to be our guide into those higher regions, where we can gaze upon truth only by the superior aid of a light from heaven.†

Another author, differing in many respects from the preceding,

\* Discours Préliminaire.

† M. Bautain, together with MM. Jouffroy and Damiron, were the three earliest and most able pupils of Cousin at the normal school. His philosophy often betrays the master-mind who instructed him.

yet maintaining a theory which has some points of similarity, is the Baron d'Eckstein. This erudite writer, though a native of Denmark, yet, from the conclusion of the last European war, became a regular inhabitant of France, and identified himself with her in all her religious and political interests. A man of great learning as well as great readiness in embodying his opinions in writing, he undertook the editorship of a periodical entitled "*Le Catholique*," from the articles of which alone his philosophy is to be gathered. With a tone more mild and liberal than most of those we have already noticed, he attached himself, for the most part, to the views of that theological party, denying (and here consists his scepticism) the possibility of obtaining truth from the testimony of our own individual consciousness, or the efforts of our own individual reason, but referring us, for that purpose, to the *authority* of the whole mass of humanity.

"It is not the individual man," he affirms, "the man of this age or of this country, to which we are to look, but to the ideal man, the type and model of the whole race. But where is this to be found, except in Adam and in Christ, who both represent our nature; the one, as created good, and then fallen—the other, as regenerated and divinely restored? Christ and Adam!—here we have *man*—the true and absolute man. What, then, must we study in order to know him? We must consult tradition; we must thoroughly initiate ourselves, by history, into the real sense of primitive Christian tradition. The whole is an affair of erudition and historical criticism; the great question is, to examine and understand the different monuments, which can retrace to us these two models of humanity—the one placed at the cradle of the world, the other at its re-creation. First, our view must be turned to India, and the regions which touch upon it; then, Greece and Alexandria, Rome and Judea; all these announce, prepare, determine, and accompany the coming of the God-man. And as, from Adam to Christ, and from Christ to our own time, the human type which they bear in them, has not passed from age to age, from country to country, without altering—as it has had its variations, its accidents, its vicissitudes, we must accordingly follow them through all their movements; we must explain and systematize them; and by so doing only can we embrace the whole subject, and give to our ideas the character of catholicity."\*

This brief summary may suffice to give a general idea of the

\* Damiron's "*Histoire de Phil.*" vol. i. p. 315.

method by which the Baron proposes search after truth; to describe his distrust in all purely philosophical processes; and to explain on what grounds it is that he lays so great a stress on the principle of authority.

From the views we have given of the theologico-sceptical school in France, it will be seen, that, while all its advocates take their stand upon catholic truth, mediated by *authority*, yet the principle of authority itself is accepted in many different significations. With M. de Lamennais, in his earlier writings, catholic truth was that which comes down to us by *human testimony*, from the primitive revelations of God to mankind; while in his later works, it is that which rests upon the fundamental beliefs of our moral and intellectual nature. With M. de Bonald, the principle of authority vested itself in the primitive fact of language; a theory by which he sought to establish the validity and divine authority both of the monarchical and ecclesiastical institutions of the Christian world. With the Baron d'Eckstein, the doctrine of authority assumes another and more genial form; it is authority based upon the deepest researches into the historical facts and catholic beliefs of universal man. The more narrow and least tenable theory of authority, is that of M. de Maistre, which makes catholic truth exist simply in the bosom of the Catholic church, and ignores all philosophy which does not base itself upon its peculiar doctrines.

This latter system still numbers its advocates in France, and is maintained, in some instances, with an amount of learning and ability, which, while we repudiate the doctrine, commands our respect for its advocates. We might mention the eloquent "conférences" of M. Lacordaire, and the elaborate work of M. Nicolas on Philosophy applied to Religion, as recent instances of the activity of this school. These, however, belong more to the department of theology. The most able work of a purely philosophical character with which I am acquainted, is an "Essay on Pantheism," by M. Maret.\* As this essay gives, perhaps, the most perfect example of the views and position of the philosophico-catholic school in France, at the present time, it may be desirable to give a brief exposition of its plan and its arguments.

The main object which the author has in view, is to fix the charge of pantheism upon all the modern philosophical systems, and then to hold up the catholic doctrine as the only alternative to which the human mind can have recourse. To accomplish this

\* "Essai sur le Panthéisme dans les Sociétés modernes," par H. Maret. (Paris, 1841.)



purpose, he begins by an examination of the principal idealistic systems in vogue; chiefly, however, of those advocated in France. The most prominent of these is the philosophy of M. Cousin. Having done justice to the splendid abilities of that great writer, he proceeds first of all to examine the prominent doctrines to which the weight of his name is attached. Taking up successively his theory of pure reason, of the infinite, of creation, and of history, he attempts to show, that they will imply a varying, unsettled, progressive truth, which is none other than bringing down the infinite to the finite; making Deity the process of mind in the world, and instituting, in fact, a disguised pantheism. The same charge which is thus fixed upon the master, is next carried on to the pupils. MM. Jouffroy and Damiron are both held up to view as disguised, perhaps unconscious pantheists; at all events, it is argued, that nothing else can flow from the principles involved in their philosophy.

The very same fundamental principles are next discovered in the writings of MM. Michelet, Lermnier, and Guizot: for do they not all advocate the *progressiveness* of truth, and the progressiveness of society; and do they not regard this development of humanity as the revelation of the Divine ideas? If God thus develop himself in humanity, what can we conclude, but that he is not *eternally* one all-perfect being; but is, in fact, the unity and totality of all *thought* in the world—that is, *one* with the universe.\*

M. Maret next approaches the various systems of modern mysticism. Collecting together the views of Saint Simon, of Fourier, of Pierre Leroux, and the whole school of social progressionists, he analyzes them much in the same way as those of the eclectics, and concludes that these are, even in a higher degree than the former, pantheistic in their whole nature and tendency.† These criticisms being completed, we have in the next chapter the real point of the whole essay, namely, that there is no possible medium between pantheism on the one side, and catholicism on the other. The last century witnessed the spread of deistic and atheistic opinions. These were, in fact, nothing at their root but utter and universal scepticism. They explained none of the great questions relating to the universe, none relating to the origin, nature, and destiny of man—in a word, they rejected all truth except the mere impressions of sense, and degraded mankind, morally and re-

\* “Essai sur les Panthéisme,” chap. i.

† Chap. ii.

ligiously speaking, to the level of the brute. In the present century, scepticism has been mastered and subdued. The great questions respecting the universe, the soul, and the Deity, have revived; the belief in the spiritual has returned; but have the problems thus excited been duly solved, and repose given to the mind eager for truth? The last chapters are an answer to this inquiry. *Every attempt at a philosophical solution throughout Europe, has ended in pantheism*; and thus the only two alternatives for every thinking man, is either to declare himself a pantheist, or to take refuge in the bosom of the Catholic church. The whole question may be reduced to a small compass. There are, says the author, two notions of truth, and two methods of investigating it. First, it is regarded as something *fixed* and stable, something which knows no progression, but, when once grasped by the mind, is eternally the same. This is the catholic view. "Catholicism starts from a divine revelation; it believes that the divine truths are preserved on the earth by a living and infallible authority; in a word, it assigns to this authority, as the depositary of the divine word, characters which distinguish it from all without, and permit all men to read upon it the seal of God." "The second notion of truth represents it as moving, variable, progressive. Truth is essentially relative to the age and the manners; it follows the movements of time, the modifications of space. Truth, then, is not the point of departure for humanity, it is rather the term to which we seek to arrive." These, according to M. Maret, are the two alternatives to which every reflecting mind must come, and the claims of which are forever irreconcilable. Accept the latter, and you accept pantheism; accept the former, and you find rest in the infallibility of the Church.

The matter being brought to this crisis, the author's work becomes now straightforward. He has simply to refute the one alternative, and maintain the other. To do this, he offers us a rapid history of pantheism from the earliest ages, and collecting its fundamental principles, first classifies, and then demolishes them at his leisure. Next he gives us a summary of the Catholic doctrine, and ends by repelling the objections of rationalists and unbelievers against *Christianity*, as though by that means he were defending and establishing *Catholicism*.

The work, as a whole, though exhibiting much talent, is as fine a specimen of Jesuitical sophistry as could very well be adduced. It evinces the talent (so necessary to the sophist) of passing over

the crucial points of the question with an air of confident rapidity, and then bringing whole magazines of artillery against doctrines which his opponents really hold no more than himself. The charge of pantheism affixed to the whole range of modern philosophy, is as unjust as it is absurd; and the *imputation of consequences* upon which that whole charge is built, one of the most insidious of all the logical fallacies. The authors whom he criticizes, are in most instances quite as strongly opposed to pantheism as he is; and, even if it were not so, *they* do not present every alternative which modern philosophy can exhibit on the idealistic side of the question. But to come to the main point of the argument, namely, the two views of truth, on which the author erects his whole superstructure; what real force is there, after all, in this much vaunted demonstration? None whatever. It all proceeds upon the confusion of Truth, regarded in its *objective*, and in its *subjective* point of view. We admit,—all philosophers, except professed pantheists, admit that truth, *objectively considered*, is fixed and eternal. What writers, in fact, have maintained the eternal and immutable distinctions of *moral relations* more earnestly than the very philosophers he upbraids and opposes? At the same time, there is assuredly a progress in the subjective signification which mankind attach to these objective realities. Has not religion itself, though objectively the same, appeared under different forms in different dispensations? and can the eternal ideas which Christianity involves, be manifested to the human mind through every age of the world alike? Under the light of this very simple and obvious distinction, the argument we are considering vanishes into a perfect nonentity: we still see that truth may be one, and yet that the human mind may make continued advancement in the development of it; nay, that it is necessary to prevent the absolute stagnation of the human intellect, that it should be ever pressing onwards to higher perfection. For here we know *in part*, and we prophesy (teach) in part; and it is not till that which is perfect be come, that that which is in part shall be done away.

We should say, therefore, that instead of there being no medium between the pantheist and the catholic, the truth lies precisely in this middle point, which is altogether passed over. The pantheist takes his stand upon the subjective principle, the Romanist upon the objective; the stand-point of a *truly* catholic system is in the centre between both. While it admits the immutability of truth *objectively considered*, it maintains the doctrine of *progress* as it regards truth



subjectively considered. And thus while it upholds the unity, the personality, and the unchangeableness of God, it throws the incentive of hope into the field of human research, and instead of bidding us pace the monotony of one eternal circle of ideas, tells us to gird our faculties to new achievements, and to prepare the world for a happier day.

In concluding this sketch of the French authoritative scepticism, we shall make one or two observations upon the principle of authority itself. And, first of all, we are far from denying its value, upon many important topics within the range of human knowledge. In theology, for example, when once we have got beyond the precincts of natural religion, authority is our best guide ;—inspired authority standing foremost, that of tradition acting occasionally as its interpreter. With the truth affirmed by such authority, philosophy has little to do, except expounding the ideas on which it rests, and testing the validity of the evidence by which it is upheld ; for beyond this it can only reserve for itself the power of pronouncing a veto upon any dogma which contradicts our natural faculties. The God of revelation and the Creator of the human faculties are the same ; and if these *seem* to contradict each other, it only proves either that the revelation is spurious, (we know that our faculties are not,) or that we have misinterpreted its meaning. With this exception, however, we conceive that the authority of a well-authenticated revelation must be regarded, within its own proper limits, as paramount and supreme.

Authority, however, while it is most valuable within the province of theology, yet, even within the range of philosophy itself, is often of no little service. The appeal to the common consent of mankind, is one which has great weight in aiding us to determine accurately the entire phenomena of the human consciousness. Individual *observation* may prove imperfect or fallacious ; but where the common consent of mankind bears testimony to the certainty and uniformity of any of our mental phenomena, we can have the less hesitation in regarding them as valid. What other than the principle of authority, as far as regards psychical observation, was that of Reid, when he appealed to the common sense of mankind ? What other is the principle of all who strengthen the testimony of their own consciousness by that of their fellow creatures ? In philosophy itself, therefore, authority is not to be altogether despised ; while with regard to matters of faith and mere opinion, it is the great appeal in which we must take refuge—the best guide by



which we can be directed—the clearest voice that speaks to us amidst the discordant sound of private judgment.

Now the error of the school which we have just described lies here,—that instead of thankfully receiving the aid of authority in those questions on which it is entitled to speak, it has exaggerated, if not its value, still the *extent* of its application, and made it at length the sole organ or channel of all truth. The fallacy couched in this procedure becomes evident at once from the consideration, that no truth which comes to us through a secondary medium, as does that of authority, can be *absolute* and *fundamental*. However unobjectionable the medium itself may be, still the knowledge it conveys has to be received through our own faculties; and if those faculties be not of equal credibility, of course the whole result may be vitiated. To plant oneself upon authority, and then deny the validity of the human intelligence to discover, test, or appreciate truth, is like sawing off the bough of the tree upon which we are standing. As the bough, severed from the stem, must fall and hurl us with it to the earth, so authority, if severed from the whole tree of human knowledge, must sink to the ground, and carry those who trust to it to the same ruin. *God makes his first and fundamental revelation to us in the constitution of our own minds.* If the credibility of this primitive revelation be rejected, it is impossible ever to prove the reality of any other. For how can we prove it? How, except by the laws of reason and the rules of testimony? In these, accordingly, all truth, as far as we are concerned, must be grounded; and the scepticism, which would shake their authority, though it attempt to furnish another in its place, must at length prove detrimental to the stability of the whole edifice of human knowledge.

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The scepticism we have just described is without doubt that which possesses, in France, the most learned and accomplished supporters. It is by no means, however, that under which the greatest number of minds in that country are to be enrolled. In England, the *popular* scepticism, if there be any, is that which sacrifices philosophy on the shrine of theological faith: in France, on the contrary, it is rather of the nature we have already described, under the appellation of the scepticism of ignorance—a scepticism in which many of the most necessary beliefs of human-

ity have been altogether lost. The history of France, during the last two or three centuries, unfolds to us the process, by which that country has well nigh sunk its faith in God and immortality. The age of the Reformation caused to resound through the French provinces, as it did through the whole of Europe, the war-cry of intelligence and liberty against spiritual despotism. Persecution and bloodshed followed, and the holiest precepts of religion were often violated by those, who stood forth as its firmest champions. The effect of this upon the minds, that stood by to gaze upon the contest, could not be long of an equivocal nature. Their faith in the Christianity they professed was shaken at once by the arguments of the Reformer, and the practice of the Catholic, the former appealing to their intellectual, the latter to their moral nature; and they learned, unhappily, to despise the one, before their belief was replaced by the other. The results of this soon became evident in the rise of men, who, like Voltaire, sported with the most solemn truths of human belief; in the establishment of the atheistical school of the French Encyclopædists; and, what was still more decisive, in the sympathy with which their works were greeted by thousands throughout the country.

What was thus fairly commenced, the horrors of the Revolution so effectually completed, that there was hardly a single region of human thought in which the tide of opposition, that raged against everything existing under the old régime, was not manifested. Monarchical institutions gave way to complete democracy; the various classes of human society were all thrown down to the broad level of citizenship; the religion of Christ (the religion of pure spirituality) gave way to the grossest materialism; the morality of the Gospel, which enjoins self-sacrifice, was exchanged for that selfish system which knows no good but pleasure, no evil but pain. The reaction, in a word, was intense, complete, universal, and as the next generation (one which had been born and fostered in these principles) grew up, though there was still the moral nature and the religious capacity innate within them, yet, alas! there was no lofty virtue for the one, no God for the other. The nineteenth century, accordingly, has exhibited to us the people of France, to a vast extent, *without a belief* in the great truths of God and immortality: happy will it be, if, too eager to supply this want, it does not again rush into the dim regions of religious mysticism and superstition. Perhaps we should be hardly correct in terming the scepticism of ignorance a philosophical school at all: it is rather

the *negation* of a school ; still it is a great fact in the present aspect of that country, and, as such, we thought it not right to pass it by without a cursory notice.

### SECT. III.—*Modern Scepticism in Germany.*

The intellectual atmosphere of Germany is one by no means calculated to encourage the growth of scepticism, least of all to cherish those two species of it, which we have described as existing to a large extent in France. Whatever other characteristics the German mind may or may not possess, there are few who would deny to it a power of deep reflection upon the world within, and a quiet independence that loves to probe every moral question to its foundations. The Germans have long proved themselves to be the thinkers and the investigators of Europe, furnishing the material out of which the more adroit and polished minds of England and France draw perpetual supplies for their higher literary productions.

If this be true, what should we say is likely to be the influence of two such mental qualities as those above mentioned, in relation to the progress of philosophy ? It appears evident, we think, at first sight, that a people who reflect deeply, and who investigate patiently, are not likely to become, to any wide extent, involved in the scepticism of *ignorance*. It is those who allow their faith to be destroyed, without having reflective habits of mind sufficiently active to supply the loss with equal rapidity, that are liable to fall into such a state of mind. The German mind, however, cannot well be without a faith. If one system of belief falls another rapidly springs up ; if one dogma comes to an end, another is ready on the instant to take its place. So great is the fertility of thought and speculation in the German world of intellect, that there seem to be theories in store to supply any imaginable series of intellectual loss that the future may present. There may be among the Germans hypotheses monstrous as well as credible, there may be systems of metaphysics and of theology extravagant as well as sober ; there may be fancies for the poetical, and wanderings for the eccentric ; but there cannot well be an absolute nonentity of belief from not knowing what there is to believe.

These same mental qualities, again, stand almost as much opposed to the scepticism of authority. To search into the monu-

ments of antiquity, is, indeed, a labor for which the German mind is admirably qualified; but when all the authority of these records is discovered, its independence prompts further questions of this nature:—What is the authority of this authority? What means had men of yore to discover truth more than I have myself? Or, if the authority be Divine, the question still comes, What is the testimony on which it rests? What the process by which it reaches my own mind? What the ideas it involves? The German thinker is too subjective in his views and tendencies to be satisfied with any merely objective evidence. He wants to know what must necessarily be true to himself individually; what confidence is to be placed even in the dictates of his own reason and his own consciousness; in other words, he wants a fundamental philosophy as a substratum, before he can allow to authority the command, which it claims over the human mind.

The only scepticism, then, of which Germany is in danger, is that of the philosophical or absolute kind; for, should the reflections and the investigations of her metaphysicians in any instances so clash with one another, that no definite results can be arrived at, such a scepticism, of course, must follow. The only instance, perhaps, in the whole philosophical history of Germany, in which a *shallow* scepticism came into vogue, is to be found during the reign of the Leibnitzian-Wolfian metaphysics. At that time the influx of French writers, on the one hand, disseminated a low, worthless sensationalism; while, on the other, the pedantry and formalism of the idealistic school brought the deeper method of philosophizing into universal contempt. The result was what we just remarked; a low, shallow, and railing scepticism, un-German in its real character, but rendered sufficiently influential by circumstances to produce a baneful effect, both upon literature and morals. It was this, in fact, that roused up the mighty spirit of Kant to an intellectual effort, which swept away all the minor actors from the stage, and commenced a new scene in the wondrous drama of the world's philosophy.

Whilst Kant, however, opposed so successfully the shallow scepticism of the age in which he lived, his philosophy contained many germs of another species of scepticism far more deep and philosophical. Determined to silence forever the quibbles and sophistries, in which so many were indulging, respecting the fundamental questions of ontology, of morals, of religion, he conceived the idea of removing them into a region altogether inaccessible to the reach



of ordinary logic, and there to let them repose in solemn majesty. The general idea of the Kantian metaphysics is, we trust, sufficiently remembered by the attentive reader to render repetition needless; but still, to prevent the obscurity, which a too great brevity might cause, we shall re-enumerate one or two of the principal conclusions. Of the three great faculties of the human mind, sensation, understanding, and reason, the first alone is capable of furnishing the *material* of our knowledge, the two latter are merely *formal*. Sensation gives us the simple fact of objective existence; understanding gives form to whatever notions we may have of it. Sensation, accordingly, in making known to us the reality of an objective world, does not tell us of what it consists, whether it be of a spiritual or of any other essence; it simply assures us of objective *phenomena*; and to these phenomena, accordingly, our real knowledge of the world without must be confined. Again: since the understanding gives to our notions all their peculiar forms and aspects, defining their quantity, quality, relation, and mode of existence, this part of our knowledge must be purely subjective, and its truth, consequently, depend upon the validity of our faculties. But further; not only is the understanding merely formal in its nature, but reason is so likewise. Reason strives to bring the notions of the understanding to a systematic unity, and in doing so it personifies its own laws, and regards them as having a real objective existence; the three personifications being the soul, the universe, and the Deity. Any logical reasoning upon these three ideas, upon their existence, or their nature, Kant shows to be entirely fallacious, giving rise in each instance to endless paralogisms. They are, in fact, *as ideas*, the spontaneous productions of our own reason, and to argue upon them as being either realities or non-realities, is allowing the understanding to intrude upon a province (that, namely, of the supersensual or spiritual) with which it has nothing whatever to do.

In this way, Kant removed the chief points around which scepticism delighted to linger entirely out of the reach of all argumentation. If any one disputed respecting the material world, his reply was, "Of what value is discussion about an existence, of which we can never know aught beyond mere phenomena?" Should any one contest or propound any theories respecting the nature of the soul, the origin of the world, or the existence of God, the same withering repulse was given, "Why reason of that which lies beyond all reasoning?" "Your notions of the soul, of the universe,

of God," he would continue, "are but subjective ideas; they are personifications of your own mental processes; I can give you strong reasons of a moral nature to believe in the soul and in God; but, as for theoretical science, it is incapable of saying anything whatever, whether it be for or *against*."

But now it becomes a question to us, whether Kant, in cutting off the plea of the sceptic of his day, did not prove too much; and whether he does not give occasion to another kind of scepticism, more deeply laid than that which he destroyed. Let us see the results, to which his principles gave origin. Reinhold, whom we must look upon as the immediate continuator of Kant's philosophy, was dissatisfied with the analysis which it furnished of the perceptive faculty. The truth of our sense-perceptions, he considered, was too rapidly taken for granted; and he suggested, therefore, the propriety, nay, the necessity, of going one step backwards, and analyzing the *consciousness* itself, as that in which the perceptions themselves are to be found. The reality, therefore, of an objective world lying without our consciousness was put in a much less obvious light by Reinhold than by Kant. The latter took the phenomena of sense at once for granted, as much so, indeed, as did Locke himself; the former, on the contrary, affirmed, that a *philosophical* conviction of their reality must result from a due analysis of the consciousness, and a recognition of the objective element which it contains.

The spirit of speculation being thus once more aroused, scepticism began to make its formal appearance in the person of Gottlob Ernst Schulze, then professor of philosophy at the university of Helmstadt. In the year 1792, Schulze published an anonymous work, entitled, "*Ænesidemus, or a Treatise on the Principles of the fundamental Philosophy of Professor Reinhold.*"\* In this work he denies that Reinhold has succeeded in proving, that any distinction of subject and object, of matter and form, can be learned from the analysis of man's inner consciousness. There exist in the consciousness itself, without any controversy, the varied phenomena which it presents to us; but as to separating these phenomena into different elements, and showing that the one belongs to the subjective, the other to the objective world, this he affirms to be impossible

\* *Ænesidemus, oder über die Fundamente der von dem Herrn Professor Reinhold, in Jena gelieferten Elementar-philosophie, nebst Einer Vertheidigung des Skepticismus gegen die Anmassungen der vernunftkritik.* (1792.) The strain of this work is purely *critical*: its sole object being to confute the attempt of Reinhold to found a purely rational and dogmatical system, respecting the human consciousness and the certainty of our knowledge respecting the objectively real.

In urging these results, Schulze did not intend to deny the existence of an objective world, he merely intended to show, that it is impossible for us to *prove it*. His scepticism, therefore, consists in the conviction he professed, that a fundamental philosophy, in which the phenomena of existence are explained and man's relation to the outward world deduced, cannot possibly be realized. His reasons for this are condensed by Michelet, in his *History of Modern Philosophy*, into the following particulars. First, in so far as speculative philosophy must be a *science* (*Wissenschaft*), it requires principles which are unconditionally *true*. Such principles, however, are impossible, because the coincidence of the idea of a thing with the thing itself is never given *necessarily* and *immediately*. Secondly, whatever the speculative philosopher asserts that he knows respecting the fundamental principles of conditional existence around him, he knows only through the medium of his own ideas. The understanding, however, which is conversant simply with ideas, has no power to represent to itself any objective reality. Representations are not things themselves, and ideas can never decide upon the objectively *real*. Thirdly, the speculative philosopher rests his science of the absolute grounds of conditional existence mainly upon an inference drawn from the nature of an effect to the nature of a corresponding cause. From the nature of an effect, however, that of its cause cannot with the slightest safety be concluded; for, that is no other than concluding the conditioned from the unconditioned. By arguments of this kind, Schulze aimed at resisting the pretensions of speculative philosophy; and had he followed out his principles, would, in all probability, have furnished in its place a theory of human knowledge grounded entirely upon experience as the only real foundation.\*

The sceptical tendency, however, which was so plainly manifested by Schulze, was not followed up to any extent by after-writers. Jacob Sigismond Beck and Salomon Maimon, it is true, added somewhat to the sceptical arguments against Reinhold, and for some time threatened to found another school of philosophy, in which all the conclusions of the human reason respecting the grounds of our knowledge should be contested and denied.† This

\* Schulze's views respecting the real nature of human knowledge are contained in his "*Kritik der theoretischen Philosophie*." This is termed dogmatical scepticism, in contradistinction to the other work, which is termed "*Critical Scepticism*," or "*Anti-dogmatism*." See Michelet, vol. i. p. 245, *et seq.*

† Beck's "*Einzig möglicher Standpunkt*," was a work of some reputation. He opposed alike Reinhold and Schulze, and maintained a system, not of empirical scepticism, like the latter, but a system of idealistic scepticism, which was not far from treading upon the verge of Fichte's subjective idealism.



sceptical tendency, however, proved of short duration ; and from the opening of the nineteenth century to the present hour, Germany has presented no school whatever, we might almost say no individual, who could be accused of cherishing the spirit of absolute scepticism.

The younger Fichte, in summing up the different directions in which the speculative spirit of Germany in modern times has flowed, makes the following mention of Schulze and his principles, together with their nature and their origin :—" The reflecting (or subjective) school, since its revival by Kant and Jacobi, has included within itself its whole process of development. We need only to place the individual forms of it as they stand by themselves in connection, or to develop them logically from one another, in order to embrace the whole cycle of their possible phases. The separation of the consciousness from objective reality in our reflection, can, on the one hand, proceed to the complete negation of the possibility of deciding upon truth (scepticism of Schulze) ; or, on the other hand, reflection may bethink itself of the original and unalterable certainty attached to the consciousness, whether it arise from faith or intuitive reason. If the certainty arise from faith, as with Jacobi, then bare reflective knowledge is regarded as empty, unnecessary, yea, superfluous in the acquisition of truth : if it arise from intuitive reason, then there is room left for a species of thinking between reflection and immediate faith. Fries, therefore, the connecting link between Kant and Jacobi, placed knowledge and faith as directly opposed to each other—the one referring to the world of phenomena, the other to the higher world of ideas. Bouterwek again, showed the unsatisfactory nature of this relation, pointing out the alternative, either of giving one's self up entirely to faith, or of boldly carrying out the principles of scepticism. Eschenmayer, at length, embraced the former of these opposites, in which he realized the direct extreme of the contrary hypothesis of Schulze."\*

Such are the different hypotheses which, according to Fichte, may arise from the separation of subject and object in the human consciousness by means of reflection. How far the sceptical tendency might have been followed out, had nothing occurred to stop its career, it is impossible to say ; but just at the juncture to which our present history refers, Fichte began to pour forth his startling idealism, and to draw away the whole philosophical world in that

\* " *Gegensatz Wendepunkt und Ziel heutiger Philosophie*," Part i. p. 298.



direction. Instead of speculating any longer upon the evidence of the objective element in our consciousness, instead of appealing to faith, or intuitive reason, or any other principle, by which its reality might be established, Fichte boldly denied the real existence of it in philosophy altogether; accounted for the phenomena of the case upon purely subjective grounds; and thus crushed the rising efforts of scepticism under the more potent arms of idealism. From that time idealism has been the national philosophy of Germany, without allowing a rival to appear in the field.

The result of this chapter may be concentrated in one sentence. With few exceptions, the chief scepticism of England is, that of authority; the chief scepticism of France, that of ignorance; the chief scepticism of Germany, that of an absolute kind, which bases itself upon the denial of the fundamental laws of human nature.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERN MYSTICISM.

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#### SECT. I.—*Modern Mysticism generally ;—In England.*

WE have now, at some length, traced the course which three of the great generic systems of philosophy have taken during the present century. We have seen the efforts which sensationalism has made to analyze all the materials of human knowledge, and deduce the primary elements of which it is composed: and, even while pointing out its many errors and defects, we have acknowledged the fruitful results, which its close investigation of our sense-perceptions has ever produced. Next, we have marked the deeper channel in which idealism has flowed, and observed its tendency to become lost in a sea of interminable speculation upon subjects, which no sounding-line of human construction can ever fathom. Both the systems admit, that truth *can* be discovered by man's natural faculties, only the former allows no source of ideas to be possible except the senses, while the latter contends for another and a profounder source, which has its seat in the very depths of man's intellectual nature. Thirdly, we have noticed and weighed the efforts of scepticism to undermine the whole foundation of truth, and bring us to the comfortless conclusion that our highest knowledge is to perceive, that we know nothing. The fourth generic system yet remains—that which, refusing to admit that we can gain truth with absolute certainty either from sense or reason, points us to faith, feeling, or inspiration, as its only valid source. This we term *mysticism*.

As the two former systems are those around which metaphysical speculation and inquiry for the most part gather, scepticism and mysticism have ever played a somewhat subordinate part in the

history of philosophy. Instead of being the *spontaneous* production of the human mind, they have generally arisen from the errors and extravagancies of other attempts. Scepticism, for instance, may be regarded as a kind of corrective process to prevent the erection of a philosophical superstructure upon an insecure foundation. The precise office which mysticism has performed in the progress of human knowledge, is that of discovering and asserting the worth of our higher feelings, whether they be instinctive, moral, or religious; for there is great danger both in the case of the sensationist and the idealist, lest, devoted, the one to the analysis of sense, the other of reason, they should overlook those sensibilities of our nature, which often speak the language of truth as certainly, if not as clearly, as reason itself. In this case, the voice of mysticism warns them of their error; it tells them that there is a source of truth which they have both left unnoticed, and which often avails, even when nothing else perhaps can, to direct reason into the right path of investigation.

To elucidate the origin and nature of mysticism, we must glance for a moment at the connection which subsists between the intellect and the emotions in the constitution of the human mind. Man may be said to have been created for two purposes, to *know* and to *do*. We can conceive of a mind utterly passionless, gazing with piercing transparency of vision upon truth; but yet unimpelled by motives to any sphere of action whatever. A being thus formed might possess the most commanding intellect, but it would never be fitted to fulfil any destiny. To rouse a mind to action there must be feelings, emotions, desires, passions: by their means alone it is that it begins to exert its influence upon things around, and, stepping forth from the sphere of its silent contemplation, to live for a purpose as it regards the universe at large. The intellectual and the practical side of humanity, however, are not severed entirely from each other. Our emotions spring forth, in some mysterious manner, from our *ideas* or conceptions; so that what the intellectual force pictures to the mind as *truth*, the emotive force reduces to feeling or impulse, and by that means at length to action. These explanations are by no means novel; they are laws or principles of our nature which many have already observed, many described; in the department of ethics, especially, the dependence of our moral feelings upon the conceptions of right and wrong which precede them, have been repeatedly asserted and illustrated by the advocates of the intellectual theory.

It may be found, however, upon a closer investigation, that these two departments of our mental constitution run more parallel with each other than has been generally supposed. M. Cousin, in one of his lectures on the true, the beautiful, and the good, has hinted at this parallelism; but not having carried out the idea to any great extent, he has left the subject fully open to future research, so that we need no apology for offering one or two additional thoughts upon it.

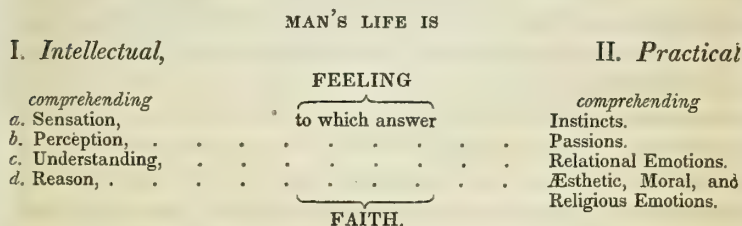
In examining, then, the phenomena of intelligence, we see a gradual progression from bare sensibility (the lowest intellectual process) to the very highest efforts of reason. We may easily detect the process in its various steps, if we imagine to ourselves an infant mind in its progressive development to maturity. That mind begins by experiencing *a sensation*; and this sensation brings with it the first gleam of knowledge, for it announces the existence of some phenomenon, though, of course, it says nothing respecting the origin or the nature of it. Next, after sensation, comes perception. Here a primitive judgment is exercised, by which the phenomena of sensation are all referred to a cause without us, to an objective world.

Thus far, indeed, the life of man and of the brute creation run completely parallel. The infant mind, however, expands still further. Having made itself acquainted with the external world, in its various forms, it begins to compare, to generalize, to combine; it observes qualities, and abstracts them; it indicates things by signs, and forms language; in a word, it shows all the marks of *understanding*, as we see it exercised in the various engagements of our outward life. Of this faculty, the brute shows but a feeble glimmering; just sufficient, however, to indicate the possession of it to a slight degree. But understanding is not all; the mind, thus far expanded, begins to look beyond the world of phenomena into that of realities; it oversteps the region of sensible into that of spiritual things; thoughts of God and of immortality occupy its deepest moments, until it rises to the loftiest attainments of human knowledge, and longs for the revelation of a brighter world. This faculty, it is almost needless to remark, is reason—the great prerogative of man alone.

Now, to each one of these different gradations of intelligence, we may see that certain gradations of sensibility precisely answer. To sensation on the intellectual side, answers *instinct* on the practical. These two, in fact, form the lowest step of both, that in



which they seem altogether to unite ; for instinct is, as it were, *an impulsive or practical sensation*. To our perceptions, again, perfectly answer the lower desires and passions ; those, I mean, which are shared alike by the man and the brute, and which arise from the nature of our physical constitution. The understanding to which we next attain, is the region of relations—that in which all the objects of the visible world are classified and arranged for logical use. Corresponding to this faculty we have the relational emotions, those which arise from the connections in which we stand to our family, our friends, our country, and to human life at large. So far, man is not strictly an æsthetic, a moral, or a religious being ; he has not yet transcended the region of sensible things, into the higher and more spiritual regions of thought and feeling. Reason conducts us into this higher world ; it unfolds to us the existence of the true, the beautiful, and good ; and corresponding to these as objects of contemplation, we have the æsthetic, the moral, and the religious emotions. Finally, just as the intellectual and practical life first start from one indefinable ground, where sense and instinct combine, so also do they terminate in one common elevation, where reason and the loftier sensibility blend together. This highest region of mental development is *faith*, the basis of all philosophy, whether it be sensational, mystical, or ideal. We may present these correlates to the eye in the following scheme :—



Now in every one of the above gradations the intellectual state chronologically precedes the emotional, and is that from which the correlate emanates. Naturalists, for example, tell us that the remarkable impulse termed instinct arises from some *sensation* which is experienced by the animal in some portion or other of the bodily frame. When our passions again are roused, there is always some object from the *perception* of which those passions appear to originate. Further, the understanding must come into play, and give us a due conception of the various relations in life, before the re-

lational emotions are excited. And, lastly, reason, at least in its spontaneous action, must unfold to us the beautiful, the good, the Divine, ere the higher affections are developed. This has been repeatedly acknowledged, both in morals and theology. There must be first the notions of right and wrong, and then the contemplation of some action, to which merit or demerit is attached, before any feeling of moral approbation or disapprobation can be evinced. In the same way our religious affections spring from our religious *ideas*, and, just according to our conceptions of God, their great object, will be the feelings we exercise in worship towards him. As *a whole*, therefore, the intellectual man must be said to guide the practical man, the groundwork of all our emotions being found in our *conceptions*.

Such, however, cannot be said to be entirely and exclusively the case; for these emotions, when once excited, react in their turn upon the intellect. They invest its ideas with new lustre and beauty: they add intensity to all its operations; and by their natural tendencies they often direct it in its researches after fresh truths. The result is, that in estimating the human mind as a whole, and giving their proper place to all the phenomena of its conscious existence, due stress must be laid both upon the intellectual and the emotional element; if either side be left unappreciated, error will be the sure result.

Now the sensationalist and the idealist both neglect, to a great degree, the emotional element contained in our nature. The former, more frequently than not, confounds emotion altogether with sensation, making them both but different modifications of the same power; while the latter too commonly confines himself simply to the analysis of reason, neglecting the reflex influence which the emotions exert upon it. On the contrary, the mystic goes exactly into the opposite excess. To him the emotions of the human mind are regarded as supreme; so that, instead of allowing the intellectual faculty to lead the way, it is degraded to an inferior position, and made entirely subservient to the feelings. Reason is in that case no longer viewed as the great organ of truth; its decisions are enstamped as uncertain, faulty, and well nigh valueless; while the inward impulses of our sensibility, developing themselves in the form of faith or of inspiration, are held up as the true and infallible source of human knowledge. The fundamental process, therefore, of all mysticism, is to reverse the

true order of nature, and give the precedence to the emotional instead of the intellectual element of the human mind.

This, then, being the common ground of all mysticism, we have next to seek after the various forms which it assumes, and to make out as far as possible some classification of them. Cousin, in the lectures to which we before referred, has given a twofold classification of the different mysticisms grounded upon the two fundamental ideas, or categories, which lie at the basis of all human knowledge; those, namely, of the finite and the infinite, of the relative and the absolute, of phenomena and substance. *Phenomenal* mysticism with him is that which actually transfers the phenomena of our inner self into the natural world, giving rise, first, to paganism, or the deification of nature, and then, as a natural consequence, to invocation, evocation, and theurgy. *Substantial* mysticism is that which imagines the infinite being to reveal himself immediately to the feelings of the human soul, giving rise to those extraordinary attempts (for which some have been celebrated) at sinking down, in their inward contemplation, beneath the veil of mere phenomena, and gazing face to face upon God. In this classification there is unquestionably much truth and much ingenuity; as it is, however, too recondite and too subjective for our present purpose, we shall attempt another, which may better answer the purpose we have before us, that, namely, of describing the history of philosophy from a more objective point of view. We divide the various species of mysticism, then, into three classes. It arises—

I. When truth is supposed to be gained in pursuance of some regular law or fact of our inward sensibility; this may be variously termed a mode of faith, or of intuition.\*

II. When truth is supposed to be gained by a fixed supernatural channel.

III. When truth is supposed to be gained by extraordinary supernatural means.

We do not assert, that any one of these suppositions is *absolutely and uniformly incorrect*; nay, we are far from denying that knowledge cannot be communicated by all three of these methods to the human mind. The mysticism which attaches itself to such views

\* Faith, or the direct intuitive reception of primary truth, we have shown to be in fact the necessary basis of all fundamental philosophy, the point in which the higher faculties and sensibilities meet. Faith, however, may partake predominantly of the rational, or of the emotional element. In the former instance, it must be regarded as the foundation of the ideal; in the latter, of the mystical philosophies.



lies in the belief, that some one of these three is the great, if not the sole channel by which we have to gain infallible truth. The former, it will be seen, is *par excellence* a philosophical mysticism, the two latter partake more largely of the element of religious mysticism.

I. We begin, then, with the first of these three modes of mysticism, that which supposes truth to be gained in pursuance of some regular law or fact of our inward sensibility. Here, of course, as in all philosophical systems, there is to be noted a progressive advancement from the milder to the more intense form, in which it makes its appearance to the world. The first step in the development of a new metaphysical school is often so insignificant, that we can scarcely perceive in what it really differs from those already in existence; just as the first deviation of two lines which form an extremely acute angle can hardly be observed, while in their progress they soon become widely separated. Such is precisely the case with respect to the point, in which idealism and mysticism first commence to diverge from each other. The former accepts reason as the organ of truth, the latter faith; but reason and faith, however they may stand apart as distinct phenomena in their ordinary acceptation, yet in their higher acceptation blend together like the colors of the spectrum, without our being able to say where the one ceases and the other begins.

Now the writer, whose works fill exactly this angle of our philosophical literature, is *Coleridge*. Our literary periodicals and reviews have teemed, for the last twenty years, with articles or observations upon the genius, the style, and the opinions of this our great poet-philosopher. To record anything here respecting his life and character, would be to repeat what almost every one already knows. His dreamy youth, his opening manhood, his collegiate life in Cambridge and in Germany, his wild purposes only created to fade away, his lecturings, his writings, his marvellous conversations, all have formed the topics of many a page and many a reminiscence. Waiving, therefore, all further allusion to these subjects, we shall now merely attempt rightly to estimate and determine the place which Coleridge holds on the philosophical stage of our country.

The philosophy which Coleridge was first *taught* must have been the sensationalism of Locke, as adapted to the wants and contingencies of modern times. The moral philosophy he heard at Cambridge, if indeed he ever attended it, was that of Paley;



and strange must it have seemed to his profound and earnest spirit, then beginning to dive into the deeper world of speculation, to hear an unpoetical utilitarianism delivered from the post of instruction in that venerable university, where once Cudworth and More poured forth all the richness of their Christianized Platonism. No wonder that he craved after the more congenial minds of Germany; of Germany with its mystery, with its poetry of life, with its spiritual philosophy: and no wonder that the literature of that country, when he once knew it, exerted a mighty influence upon him through the rest of his life—an influence which shows with what eagerness he gazed upon the new world of thought and of feeling, which was there opened to his wonder and delight.

Having mastered the principles of Kant, and looked into those of Fichte, Coleridge returned home with his predispositions to the higher metaphysics at once fixed and directed. Had he been brought up amongst the metaphysicians of Germany he would undoubtedly have been a German idealist of the true stamp; as it was, however, the commingling of his early education with the idealism of Kant and Fichte gave to his mind a tinge of mysticism, which was only heightened by his passionate love of poetry and æsthetics. To comprehend, then, the exact nature of this mysticism, (which is the precise object we have now in view,) we must first attempt to grasp some of the grand metaphysical principles, which our author labored to establish.

Man is viewed by Coleridge as possessing (besides some minor ones) four great and fundamental faculties:—sensation, understanding, reason, and will. With regard to sensation, we find nothing in his writings that can be considered of any importance. The reality of our sense-perceptions was antecedently admitted by him, just as they were by Locke, Kant, and most others; in no case that I am aware of, did he venture upon any transcendental theory to account for these phenomena, or dive so far into the spirit of idealism, as to deny their objective validity. In proceeding, however, from sensation to understanding and reason, we soon get at one of the main points of Coleridge's metaphysical opinions. The distinction drawn between the *Verstand* and the *Vernunft*, in the philosophy of Kant, has been already explained at some length. Coleridge seized this distinction with great clearness, and, having done so, preached, defended, and illustrated it, with all the ardor of his profound and philosophic mind. The one he terms reasoning *by sense*; the other, reasoning *beyond sense*. The one is con-

finer to the objects and relations of the outward world ; the other, to those of the spiritual world ;—the one relates to the forms, under which we view the finite and contingent ; the other relates to the forms, under which we image to ourselves the infinite, the absolute, the eternal. This distinction, to which we have already so often referred, unquestionably underlies a very large proportion of Coleridge's philosophical theories. I will simply recall one passage from "The Friend," (vol. iii. p. 202,) as an example of this peculiar feature of his writings. Speaking of the idea of pure being, he says—"The power which evolved this idea of being,—being in its essence, being limitless,—how shall we name it ? The idea itself, which, like a mighty billow, at once overwhelms and bears aloft, what is it ? Whence did it come ? In vain would we derive it from the organs of sense ; for these supply only surfaces, undulations, and phantoms ! In vain from the instruments of sensation ; for these furnish only the chaos, the shapeless elements of sense. And least of all may we hope to find its origin or sufficient cause in the moulds and mechanism of the *understanding* ; the whole purport and functions of which consist in individualization, in outlines, and differencings, by quantity, quality, and relation. It were wiser to seek substance in shadow, than absolute fulness in mere negation." \* \* \* After showing that the idea of pure being is, notwithstanding all this, a real one, borne witness to by the clearest light of our inward nature, he adds—"By what name, then, canst thou call a truth so manifested ? Is it not a *revelation* ? And the manifesting power, the source and the correlative of the idea thus manifested, is it not God ?" How is it possible to show more clearly than this, the blending of our higher reason and intellectual sensibility in the one supreme principle of *faith*, as the organ of all primitive and fundamental truth ?

Our author, however, has not only imitated Kant in reference to the general distinction between understanding and reason, but has also accepted this twofold division of reason itself into the *theoretical* and the *practical*. The one is reason, as applied to the comprehension of truth ; the other is reason, as applied to the regulation of actions. Pure reason tells us what is necessary and real in existence ; practical reason tells us what is incumbent upon us as moral agents. The one has to do simply with the intellectual man ; the other has to do with the *will*. All the moral philosophy, we believe, which the writings of Coleridge contain, ultimately rests upon the validity and the authority of the practical

reason, as a categorical imperative, an indisputable law, formed to regulate and control human life.

The part of our constitution, however, which Coleridge dwells upon with the greatest delight, is *the will*. It had been the effort of sensationalism to identify volition with pathological and sensational phenomena; that is, to sink the personality of the human will in feelings arising from our nervous sensibility. Coleridge had drunk deep enough into the subjective spirit of Kant's philosophy, to see the complete futility of all such attempts: he learned there to look with an almost piercing intensity of vision into the native constitution of the mind, the original power of the *me*; and applying this keen perception to the practical side of our humanity, he recognized in every man A WILL, a spiritual force (entirely distinct from his animal nature) given to him by God, to regulate his higher life. This will, accordingly, he regarded as the source of moral obligation, the germ of our religious being, the link by which our earthly nature is united to those higher natures, which evince a pure spontaneity for eternal holiness and love. These elements, therefore—the understanding, the reason, and the will—form the basis of Coleridge's metaphysical speculations. The view which he takes of them, though strongly marked, yet is by no means original; the counterpart of almost all his notions on these subjects, is to be found somewhere or other among the German idealistic writers—the greater part of them in the philosophy of *Kant*.

So far, then, Coleridge is to be reckoned properly as idealistic in his tendency; and had he stopped here, must have been classed as one of that school. Having carried on his investigations, however, up to this point, he proceeds to construct, out of the elements above mentioned, a new organ of truth, termed *faith*, by means of which a fresh light, unattainable by reason alone, is shed over the whole mind. Reason, according to Coleridge, blends with the will: in other words, the faculty by which we gaze upon absolute truth, unites with that by which we are conscious of our own personality; and from hence originates a new insight into the secrets of man's destiny both in time and eternity. "Faith," to use his own words, "consists in the synthesis of the reason and the individual will. By virtue of the latter, therefore, it must be an energy; and, inasmuch as it relates to the whole man, it must be exerted in each and all of his constituents, or incidents, faculties, and tendencies: it must be a total, not a partial—a continuous, not a desultory or occasional energy. And by virtue of the former



(that is, reason), faith must be a light—a form of knowing—a be-  
holding of truth. In the incomparable words of the Evangelist,  
therefore, faith must be a light, originating in the Logos, or the  
substantial reason, which is co-eternal and one with the holy will,  
and which light is at the same time the life of men.”

From this passage it is evident, that the faith element enters de-  
cidedly into the higher branches of Coleridge’s metaphysical sys-  
tem; that truths are supposed to be conveyed to us by its means,  
which could not come solely through the understanding or the rea-  
son, and that there is a mixture of mysticism, therefore, with his  
idealistic principles, showing itself particularly in the application  
of his philosophy to religion. At the same time, faith, as viewed  
by Coleridge, is not a distinct and independent faculty; but the  
blending of the higher faculties in *one*; so that his mysticism is of a  
kind which stands on the very verge of idealism, not daring to ven-  
ture without the sight of the reason, nor choosing to trust itself to  
the *uncontrolled* suggestions of faith or of feeling.

The extraordinary value of Coleridge’s writings, we think, must  
be fully admitted by every impartial mind. They form the first  
successful attempt of modern times, in our own country, to ground  
any of the great doctrines of Christianity upon a philosophical  
basis, without at the same time detracting aught from their pecu-  
liarly evangelical character. Added to this, they open a sphere of  
metaphysical thinking well adapted to counteract the objective  
tendency of our national philosophy, and to direct the mind to  
those lofty views respecting human nature and human destiny,  
which, in the turmoil of our practical life, and in the want of a  
more spiritual system, we are so inclined to forget.

To estimate the mind of Coleridge *philosophically*, we should  
say, that most of his opinions and tendencies arise from the pre-  
dominance which the ideas of *self* and *God* ever held in his intel-  
lectual being. The former idea led him to the deep investigation  
of the intellectual faculties, and the will; the latter led him to  
apply his metaphysical principles to the truths of religion. When,  
therefore, he found that the objects of religious contemplation  
transcended the powers of his rational nature to comprehend, im-  
mediately he sought to bring in the aid of his moral nature, and to  
construct out of the reason and will combined, another faculty,  
which should be adapted to the perception of these sublime truths.  
In so far as he has attributed to this new power of faith a super-  
rational capacity, must Coleridge be termed a mystic; but his mys-



ticism, religiously speaking, only consists in attempting to explain by these means the scriptural doctrines which most men receive, simply upon the authority of inspiration. The influence of Coleridge upon the age has been, and still is, more extensive than many imagine. His works form just the turning point in the philosophical history of our country, in which the advancement of sensationalism came to a stand, and the tide of spiritualism began to return. That tide has since continued to deepen and increase, and we anticipate ere long the time, when England shall again boast a philosophy which is worthy the name, and take its stand with France and Germany, as partner in the further development of abstract truth.\*

Another somewhat remarkable development of philosophical mysticism appears in the works of Thomas Taylor, the learned translator of Plato. This, we should say, is chiefly remarkable as being a complete revival of the ancient Platonism—a fresh establishment of it amidst the varied systems of modern times. The power of gazing upon the pure forms of all existence—of seeing the archetypes of all creation, reposing in the mind of Deity, we must regard as being a kind of intellectual intuition, sufficiently distinct from reason to warrant the appellation of mysticism rather than idealism, as distinctive of the system. The Platonic point of view we regard, indeed, as one step in advance of Coleridge: it not only advocates that kind of immediate intuition of truth—that gazing upon pure ideas, which Coleridge admitted; but it denies the possibility of rising to this lofty contemplation, while the mind is debased by the perpetual contact of material things. Listen to Mr. Taylor's reflections upon this point—"The conceptions of the experimental philosopher, who expects to find truth in the labyrinths of matter, are not much more elevated than those of the vulgar; for he is ignorant that truth is the most splendid of all things; that she is the constant companion of the divinity, and proceeds together with him through the universe; that the shining traces of her feet are conspicuous only in form; and that in the dark windings of matter she left nothing but a most obscure and fleeting resemblance of herself. This delusive phantom, however, the man of modern science ardently explores, unconscious that he is running in profound darkness and infinite perplexity, and that he

\* The student of Coleridge, as a philosopher, should first peruse the "Biographia Literaria," from thence he may proceed to ponder over the "Aids to Reflexion." Next he may make acquaintance with "The Friend;" and not forget, at last, those few suggestive pages, which purport to be the "Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit."

is hastening after an object, which eludes all detection and mocks all pursuit."

Coleridge would scarcely have proceeded to this extent. He would have asserted the combination of our best faculties into one supreme faith-principle, by which truth could be immediately conveyed to the mind; but he would not have insisted upon the *renunciation* of physical investigation, and the absorption of the mind in Deity, as the only method of rising to the heights of true science. It is through advancing such opinions, that the name of Plato, even to the present day, stands on the threshold of almost every system of mystical philosophy.

The most remarkable phase, however, of this school of mysticism has been realized in the notions of JAMES PIERREPONT GREAVES, the friend, and for some time the coadjutor, of Pestalozzi. Mr. Greaves was born near London, in 1777, and educated to mercantile life. On meeting with some reverses in business, he went to the Continent, and spent some time at Heidelberg, where he gathered many of the rising literati around him, and first began to open his new and strange opinions. From thence he went to Switzerland, and lived ten years with Pestalozzi, engaging ardently with him in the work of infant tuition, and maturing still further his spirit-philosophy. On his return to England, he devoted himself to the improvement of popular education, and to spreading the views he had formed among his fellow-men. He died in the year 1844, beloved by many, and admired by a few.

To gain a clear conception of Mr. Greaves' philosophy, is a matter of no ordinary difficulty; and still more difficult is it to explain it. The idea which lay at the basis of all his thoughts, seems to be the superiority of *being* to all knowing and doing. He considered that the great evil in life was *selfishness*, i. e., the regard to *individual* instead of general being; that before any improvement could be made, the inner man must be appealed to, and united with the love-spirit—the eternal and divine nature. His philosophy was, in fact, a species of spiritual socialism, in which all human natures were to be united and harmonized by the perfect submission of every soul to the law of love, and the passive yielding itself to the impulse of the spirit.

A memoir of Mr. Greaves has been written by Mr. A. F. Barham,\* one of his friends and admirers, as an introduction to a vol-

\* Mr. Barham is himself a mystic philosopher. His system is termed *Alism* (from the name of Jehovah), and purports to view everything in the light of the Divine.

ume of his private correspondence. I select the following passage from this life, as giving a very intelligible delineation of *the man*; though we may not be so well able to grasp his views as a philosopher. "His mind was of a very ethereal, transcendental, and mystical cast, resembling that of Jacob Behmen, to whom he was fervently attached. This peculiarity in intellect, did not well accord with the mercantile business in which his earlier years were spent, and, after getting rich in commerce, he lost his fortune by imprudent speculations. On the settlement of his affairs, he went abroad, and became particularly intimate with Pestalozzi, and his educational system; in short, Greaves was for years Pestalozzi's right hand man, and he first introduced Pestalozzi's books and methods into this country. It was during his residence abroad, that Greaves became profoundly initiated in the German and Swiss illuminism; he also attached himself to the æsthetic or sentimental philosophy, on which Baumgarten, Kant, Richter, and Schiller wrote so eloquently. This æsthetic philosophy, long popular in Germany, Greaves endeavored to promote in this country; and he formed an æsthetic society, the only one I ever met with in Britain, which used to meet every week in his house in Burton Street.

"The divine reality to which Greaves ever directed was the life of God in man's soul. He professed himself an *Alist* emphatically in my presence. He recognized, like Fénélon, Poiret, Law, and other mystics, an inspiring vital divinity, which he used to term the central spirit, or fountain of immortality within. It is almost impossible to describe aright the fervor and enthusiasm with which Greaves maintained the reality of the alistic and divine spiritualism. He professed that he realized it as actually present, as an element in life more intense than any imaginable electricity; and his faith in this spirit, by which he felt himself inspired, always preserved in him the most lively cheerfulness and freedom from anxious care. This was the more remarkable, as Greaves drank nothing but water, and ate only fruit and vegetables for many years before his death. He said to those who recommended him a grosser style of diet, that the central spirit always burned brighter and stronger in proportion to his abstinence from meats; nor was his joyous animation apparently depressed by a painful internal disease, which tormented him extremely, and finally brought him to his grave."

We might go on to multiply our explanations of this mystical

His views are contained in a volume, entitled "A," which comprehends three numbers of a periodical termed *The Alist*, with other miscellanies.



philosophy to an indefinite extent ; but as the author seemed totally incapable of throwing his ideas into a systematic and logical form, we fear that the reader, like ourselves, would fail to grasp the essence of it after all. As, however, Mr. Greaves has some followers and admirers, of whom we may name Mr. H. N. Wright in England, and Mr. Alcott in America, who has already written many valuable thoughts on education, we must look forward to see whether there is really a germ of living thought lying under the uncouth phraseology with which we are scandalized ; and whether it can ever unfold itself to a system of philosophic truth. Meantime, we must request the reader, whose curiosity would prompt him to look into this form of modern mysticism, to consult "The Contrasting Magazine," published in 1827, a small volume, entitled "Physical and Metaphysical Hints for Everybody," "Thoughts on Spiritual Culture," and a pamphlet, entitled "The sentiments of R. Owen and J. P. Greaves contrasted." To attempt fully to explain the system which these works unfold, would be attempting to explain that of which we have never succeeded in gaining a clear conception ; we merely point out the above works as containing one of the most mystical of all the mysticisms of the present age.

II. The second mode of mysticism is that which supposes truth to be gained by a fixed supernatural channel. And, first, we must show the distinction between the mysticism we have now to consider, and the scepticism, based on authority, to which we made reference in the former chapter. In that case, it will be remembered, there was a formal denial of the validity of the human faculties ; truth, attainable by no other means, was supposed to flow by various channels from a primitive revelation of God to man ; and the mind, well-nigh powerless in itself, was regarded as the bare receptacle of ideas coming to it from an *outward* source. In the mysticism now before us, there is, indeed, the same denial of validity to the intellectual faculties in their original state ; but by supernatural interposition, regularly and systematically supplied, they are imagined to be so enlightened and stimulated, as to apprehend truth—even such as lies beyond the reach of the natural man. We term the former scepticism ; because, on the hypothesis there made, the mind of man never becomes *per se* cognizant of absolute truth, but simply receives it through a given medium from an *objective* source. We term the latter, on the other hand, mysticism ; because the mind is made actually capable subjectively, of



*acquiring* truth, but is conditioned for this process by supernatural agency.

This form of mystical philosophy has been maintained in our own country chiefly by teachers of religion, some of whom have put forth sentiments on the subject sufficiently remarkable to demand our attention. Their speculations, as might be expected, refer rather to moral than to metaphysical truth, their object being to show, that a valid moral philosophy is impossible when the assistance of revealed religion is not embraced in the creation of it. We shall attempt, therefore, to give a brief analysis of the system, as it appears in the writings of one or two of its abettors.

And, first, we shall refer to a somewhat small volume, entitled "Christian Morals," by the Rev. W. Sewell, M.A., formerly Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford,—a volume pretty extensively known, as containing the ethical system adopted by the Tractarian Theologians. In this work there is, undoubtedly, much to admire, but much also, as we think, to repudiate; much good reasoning, but still more unwarrantable assumption; many glimpses of truth, but still too many admissions of error. With the anti-sensationalism of the author we fully coincide, and have rejoiced in the stern rebukes with which he has met its shallow pretensions; but, with the exception of what bears upon this point, we can find very little that assumes a truly scientific character in the whole volume.

The object of the work, it should be understood, is to sketch out a complete system of ethics; to account for the existence of moral truth in the world; to explain the nature and growth of the moral emotions in the human mind. The author, almost at the outset, abjures all the attempts which a rationalistic or ideal philosophy is able to make, in order to do this; with equal decision he denies the claims both of eclecticism and syncretism;\* and, having thus cleared the way, introduces at length his own theory on the subject. The essence of this theory may be stated in few words.

Man, by the very constitution of his mind, is adapted to perceive certain relations, as existing between persons, just in the same manner, as by a primitive judgment we perceive relations between things."†

The feelings, which arise within us, on the perception of them are instinctive, and, consequently, both universal and eternal.‡

\* Chaps. 7, 8, and 9.

† Chaps. 23 and 24.

‡ Page 349. "From whence do these ideas of relation come? They are implanted

In this perception, then, and in these feelings, lies the primitive germ of our moral being.

Man, however, at his birth, is under the influence of a corrupt nature; the evil spirit has dominion over him; so that, instead of perceiving these moral relations aright, he views them distortedly, and acts, as the consequence, incongruously.\*

All moral education consists in impressing upon minds the right knowledge of these relations; because from right knowledge of them, right actions will infallibly flow.†

This education begins in the act of Christian baptism; by which we are placed in an entirely new position with respect to moral evil, the heart being in that act regenerated, and the powers of evil exorcised.‡

The moral faculties being thus set right, they must be further enlightened, strengthened, and perfected by the instruction of the Catholic Church; by perfect submission to all its requisitions; and by the mystery of the holy communion, in which we become partakers of a Divine nature—the old man being crucified and dead.

In this manner the moral emotions become healthy and active; the dim undefined light of nature is no longer our guide; but we follow the road pointed out to us by the authorized teachers of Catholic Christianity, our faculties having been prepared beforehand rightly to receive and clearly to comprehend all their instructions.§

These ideas, then, we select out of the mass of theories and opinions which come before us in the work under consideration, as containing the essence of its moral system. The whole, in fact, may be compressed in these few words. Man is born with a moral capacity, but in a confused and perverted state; the grace conveyed in baptism sets him morally right; and the living teaching of the Church has to perfect what is thus commenced.

Now, in the whole development of this system, however ingenious it may be, it cannot be concealed that the writer is aiming at a particular purpose, rather than investigating impartially scientific truth. The whole plan of it is so heterogeneous, that it could hardly have been formed in any mind without the influence of

in us by nature. They lie dormant in the mind of every human being, are unalterable, eternal." In p. 381, however, the author says, that "We must learn both the relations, and duties consequent on them, from the witness appointed by God to reveal his will," and these are the parent, the king, and the Church. I cannot undertake to expound this jumble of Platonism and Hobbism.

\* Chaps. 12 and 14.

‡ Chap. 16.

† Chap. 23.

§ Passim.

certain outward motives to mould the opinions advanced into their fantastic shapes. . It is with the greatest difficulty indeed that we can arrange the system, scientifically speaking, under any particular school. The first step in man's moral development, as our author views it, is grounded upon idealism,—it affirms innate moral powers and instincts. The next step is scepticism; for it affirms the fundamental disorder of these powers, and the consequent *impossibility* of gaining moral truth by them alone. The third step is mysticism; for by a supernatural agency, the nature of which is not very explicitly stated, the moral perfections are all rectified in a moment, the spirit that haunted them exorcised. Lastly, with all the author's horror for eclecticism and syncretism, yet we find him culling from Plato, from Aristotle, from the Christian fathers, as well as all the different philosophical schools of modern times, to which we have just alluded. Let any one compare the ethical philosophy of Jouffroy (the great eclectic moralist of France) with the work now before us, and say in which lies the least eclecticism and the greatest unity, both of design and of execution. We doubt not, but that any impartial and scientific judge would give the palm in this respect to the former.

With the idealism, and, to a certain extent, with the eclecticism of Mr. Sewell (for eclectic he assuredly is) we can fully sympathize; they harmonize perfectly with the principles we have maintained throughout this whole work: with his scepticism and his mysticism, however, we entirely disagree. Let us turn our attention for a moment to his *scepticism*. The principle upon which this proceeds is shown, first of all, in the contest that he undertakes against rationalism. The author here attempts to repel and to pour abundant ridicule upon the attempt, which some philosophers have made, to form for themselves a system of ethics simply by the exercise of their own reason. Moral truth, derived in this way, he considers as synonymous with "*the fancies of individual men*," and strives to prove that, whatever may be viewed upon this ground as right one day, may be proved wrong the next.

To bear out his assertions on this point, he takes some two or three *parallel* (!) illustrations from the experimental sciences—as geology, chemistry, &c. ; as though it followed, that, because men cannot form right conclusions on these matters without the aid of the observation and testimony of others, therefore they cannot do so in the case of abstract and necessary truth. Why, the argument of the idealist is constructed to meet this very objection. He

contends that there are certain principles of eternal and immutable truth in the world ; that, while empirical facts must be gained by observation, by diligent colligation, and by the testimony of others on the same points, there are certain foundation truths, which rest upon the necessary constitution of our own minds, and for the pledge of whose validity we need no second opinion. Might not the "*dear little original independent thinker*," whom the author chuckles over, perchance discover, that the angles at the base of an isosceles are equal ? Might he not haply rear up a whole edifice of mathematical truth without the least fear, that what he discovers to-day may prove wrong to-morrow ? Now idealism contends that there are axioms of metaphysical, of moral, aye, and of theological truth, too, which are quite as certain as those we have just mentioned. The only proof of the validity of mathematical axioms and deductions, is, that they express *necessary* relations, which our reason, constituted as we have it, can never reject ; and precisely the same proof is at hand to verify the fundamental laws, both of moral and of metaphysical philosophy. Here, as well as in mathematical investigations, we discover principles which appeal at once to the human consciousness, and which possess that mark of *necessity*, which raises them altogether above the reach of mere observation, or the province of external testimony. Let men beware how they tamper with these primary laws of human belief ; let them beware how they allow scepticism to plant its first step within the region of our rational convictions : once undermine the power and validity of our faculties in their application to the grounds, either of metaphysics, morals, or religion, and the catholic testimony of the whole Church will not save the most precious truth we possess from refutation and ruin.

Again, the author's scepticism shows itself in the effects which he regards as flowing from the corruption of human nature. His theory is, that this corruption prevents us from viewing moral relations aright ; and that the evil cannot be rectified without the rite of baptism and the aid of the Church. What is here involved, we would ask, but a perpetual paralogism ? The *duty* of belief, the *duty* of submission, the *duty* of entire trust to authority, is reiterated and asserted to satiety ; but whence, it is demanded, does the *obligation* of exercising such belief and such submission flow ? My friend over the way, perchance, was never canonically baptized ; he has never had the mysterious influence supposed exerted upon him ; he has never sat at the feet of a Catholic, or Anglo-



Catholic priest ; his moral nature, therefore, is unsound ; he cannot possibly view the relations of duty aright. On what ground, then, do you urge upon him the *duty of belief*? He has not, on the hypothesis before us, the capacity to feel it to be a duty. Words to him are nothing : for there is no correct moral sensibility to work upon. Talk not of his sin, his pride, his resistance of law, his rejection of God's authorized teachers ; if his fundamental notions of moral obligation are perverted, duty is to him, in comparison with a baptized person, a nonentity. In brief, if those without the Catholic Church are left so perverted, that their moral nature does not act aright within them, then all argument to bring them to the pale, all attempts to prove them wrong, must be unavailing : the only course must be to cajole them to the font, and having regenerated them, then, at length, to appeal to their renewed hearts. Whilst, however, the moral faculties are all twisted, in the name of consistency do not blame them for a want of belief, the obligation of which they are morally incapable of perceiving. Again we say, to deny the validity of a man's moral faculties, and then to affirm him wrong in not performing the moral act of belief, implies a paralogism in reason, and an absurdity in practice.

Into the author's *mysticism* we should be tempted to enter far more largely, were we writing on theological principles rather than those of speculative philosophy. As, however, we certainly regard it entirely out of place, in a work pretending to scientific rigor, to advance so loosely and affirm with so little proof, as our author has done, the reality of sacramental efficacy, so we should be stepping out of our own track in marshalling any arguments, derived from Scripture or experience, which may lie against it. But extraordinary it certainly appears to us, that any one should accuse man's instinctive moral convictions of *indefiniteness*, and then appeal to an abstraction, called the Catholic Church, to obtain a scientific system of ethical truth in which this indistinctness should be rectified. Let any one consider the mass of conflicting opinions, both on religion and ethics, which has been held by the visible church in different ages ; let any one consider the difficulty of deciding which out of this whole mass must be Catholic truth and which the incrustation of error ; let any one look round him now, and see how many authorized teachers of the Church itself are giving completely contradictory views on the same points, and those of fundamental importance ; let any one, in fine, estimate

the difficulty and uncertainty of historical inquiry reaching back into remote ages, the chief monuments of which have perished in the wreck of time, and then say, whether he is willing to rest the fundamental principles of moral obligation upon this basis.

The whole work is in fact a feeble imitation of the modern French Catholic school of philosophy. When the authors of such works have so vast an amount of authority as is presented by the Catholic Church to back these arguments, there is at least some semblance of argument, especially as addressed to a Catholic people. But for the advocate of one small school out of the whole mass of Protestantism to set up the plea of universal authority, and that too grounded on his own sectarian interpretation of the Christian doctrines,—this is indeed an exhibition over which the Gallican Catholic may smile, but the English Protestant will only be inclined to mourn.

Leaving, therefore, the Anglo-Catholic system of ethics, we go on to notice another form in which this same species of mysticism is sometimes advanced, and that is, when the authority of the Bible is substituted for that of the Church. I might mention Dr. Wardlaw's "Christian Ethics" as an instance of that to which I am now alluding; in which it is maintained that human nature is too perverted morally ever to arrive at pure ethical truth without the influence which the revealed word exerts upon the mind. Here, as in the other case, there is a principle involved, which, if consistently maintained, would strike at the root of all moral obligation. For, not only must our personal responsibility on this hypothesis be diminished, but even religion itself must lose its foundation and its force, when once the sanctity of conscience, as an inward law, is disowned. All religion rests upon the existence of a God, infinitely just and holy, as well as powerful and great; but of what use were it that the moral perfections of Deity should be displayed in the world around us, or in the written word, if we had no correct moral sensibility, to which these manifestations might appeal? Unless there were a standard of right within us, we could never *conceive* of holiness or moral perfection as the attributes of the Supreme Being; and, wanting this conception, religion would be a nonentity.

The influence of depravity falls primarily upon our *dispositions*. Indisposition towards what is holy may divert our thoughts from moral truth, and weaken our conceptions of it; then, the conceptions being weakened, the moral emotions will be less intense.

But never can sin invert or disturb the great principles of man's moral nature. Conscience may be *seared*, but never *deranged*; it may cease to speak, but it will never turn upside down the great relations of good and evil. Moral *approbation* will ever follow the perception of what is esteemed right; moral *disapprobation* the perception of what is esteemed wrong. Were we to suppose it to be otherwise, man would not only be placed beyond the region of responsibility; but there would be a moral impossibility that he could ever be taught the sacredness of virtue, or the turpitude of vice. Just as no teaching could convey the notion of salt or bitter, if sensation were deranged, so, also, no course of moral instruction, not even a revelation itself, could ever give us the perception of good and evil, if our moral sensibilities were thrown into confusion.

III. We come now to consider the third mode of mysticism, to which we have alluded; that, namely, which supposes all truth to be gained by extraordinary supernatural means. This, of course, must be regarded simply as a species of religious mysticism, held, for the most part, by those who make but little pretension to philosophical investigation. It results frequently, for example, from an exaggerated view of the Scriptural doctrine of Divine influence. Not a few earnest believers in Christianity, with a mistaken desire of enhancing the value of revelation, would have us to suppose, that all absolute truth must be communicated by the special operation of the Spirit upon the mind. Man, it is argued, is blinded by sin, his reason is beclouded, he cannot understand revealed truth though it blaze forth in the clearest light from the sacred page; but a special enlightenment comes over him, and then truth becomes plain and obvious.

In this system, we see simply the exaggeration of a great theological doctrine. That the eternal and infinite Spirit should communicate with those finite spirits, which are emanations from its own essence, is philosophically probable, and theologically certain; but far is this from justifying the sweeping conclusion, that *all* absolute truth must depend upon such especial communings of God with man. To the *spiritual* nature of man, indeed, they may be all in all; but God has not left him so irresponsible as it would be implied that he really is, were he entirely dependent *intellectually* upon the extraordinary communications of spiritual influence, in order to view truth aright. That direct intercourse with God is permitted, and that it answers a purpose infinitely important in



human destiny, we fully believe; but assuredly it was never intended to supply the place, or to contravene the duty, of our own intellectual effort. As these phenomena, however, come more under the idea of religious than philosophical mysticism, we shall now, having indicated their existence, forbear to pursue them any farther.

To sum up, then, our remarks upon the modern mysticism of England in few words, we would remind our readers that the errors which it contains are all errors either of *defect* or of *exaggeration*; and that every form of it really contains some germ of truth at the basis, to which it owes its existence. Look at the first form. That truth may stream in rays of beauty upon the mind, through the medium of our inward sensibility, (since all our affections have their appropriate object,) we can hardly entertain a doubt; but when sensibility is substituted for reason, and raised to a position superior to it in the development of our knowledge, then there is an error admitted, which only needs a little unfolding to produce the wildest fancies of the philosophical mystic. Again, to adduce the second form—we should be far from denying that there is such a thing as a fixed supernatural channel, by which God reveals his will to mankind; for the Bible, as we regard it, is such a channel, and so also is the Church. But when the Bible on the one hand, or the Church on the other, is raised up as an authority upon the *ruins* of human reason, we cannot but think that a suicidal act is virtually committed, inasmuch as if the validity of reason is undermined, the possibility of proving the authenticity of revelation itself is forever destroyed. Lastly, to adduce the third form of mysticism, we do not reject the illumination of the soul of man by especial outpourings of Divine influence; but we contend that such influences relate to man's *religious* progress in his probationary state, and are not to be regarded as the channels for conveying to any mind either physical or metaphysical truth. Mysticism, in fact, within its due limits, expresses what is true and sacred; beyond those limits it becomes a vain and a pernicious assumption.

## SECT. II.—*Modern Mysticism in France.*

France is a country by no means favorable to the rise or the growth of mysticism. In no other nation of Europe is the *understanding* so perfectly developed as there. In none is the higher



reason, generally speaking, developed so *imperfectly*. As a consequence of this, sensationalism has long been, and still is, the philosophical system of the mass; and although a strong reaction has set in, it has not yet worked long or powerfully enough to raise the minds of many into that lofty region of thought, which is chiefly accustomed to be swept by the clouds and vapors of mysticism. France is the country of clear, transparent, mathematical thinking. Its language is of all others definite; its idioms of all others most logically correct, and least poetical. In vain do we search in France for the poesy of England, or the deep, mystic, and reflective spirit of Germany. Extravagant romance may be sufficiently at home there, both in literature and in life; but the spiritual nature, the spring of what is greatest in humanity, is too often untouched.

The stirring scenes of the Revolution, and the expectations which it raised throughout the world of the coming regeneration of human society, directed the thinking minds of France more particularly to the *philosophy of social life*; and it is in this department that speculations nearest bordering upon mysticism have made their appearance in that country.

The name of St. Simon is well known as heading a band of political regenerators. The system, however, which he originated, embraces not only the details of a new social constitution, but some other doctrines, which demand a little consideration under the present section. The mystical element, we should premise, does not attach itself to St. Simonism in its *principles*, so much as in its details and its *spirit*. However rational the grounds of any system may appear, yet when its advocates separate themselves from the rest of the world, as some superior race; when they adopt a peculiar garb and dress; when they announce a great crisis in the world's history, and promise a complete regeneration of human society of which they are themselves the precursors; it is hardly possible to withhold from such visionary enthusiasts the charge of mysticism. St. Simon not only attempted to introduce new social principles, but a new Christianity. Moses, it was said, had promised to men a universal fraternity. Jesus Christ had prepared it: St. Simon has realized it. In him the universal Church at length appears, in which the whole man, socially as well as individually, is embraced.

Claude Henri Count de St. Simon was born at Paris, A.D. 1760, of a noble family. At an early age he went to America, and

served in the republican army. There his first ideas of a new state of society were formed; and when he returned to France, instead of taking any part in the Revolution, he gave himself up entirely to the realization of his cherished plans of social reform. In 1814 he published a tract on the "Reorganization of European Society." Other works on the same topics followed in quick succession; at length, poor in resources, and neglected by his countrymen, yet to the very last urging his few followers to go on in the path he had opened for them, he expired A.D. 1825.

After the death of the apostle, strange to say, the doctrines he had lived for became suddenly popular. Many of the first men joined the ranks of his disciples; and his principles were powerfully advocated in the "Producteur," and even to some extent in the "Globe." Around these elements a school of social science was soon gathered. The sentiments it upheld were publicly taught; books were written to defend them; journals published to advocate them; and even missionaries were sent forth to preach the new faith throughout Europe. At this juncture, the civil authority interfered,—the school itself, erected upon a very shallow foundation, suddenly fell, and after a brief but brilliant career, passed away like a dream.

St. Simonism comes before us as a system at once of religion, philosophy, and government—one, too, by which professedly all the ills of humanity are to be removed. That those ills are at present fearful both in character and extent, all are ready to admit; but there are few who can understand the source from whence they arise. Their real source, says St. Simon, is to be found in the total and universal want of *social unity*. Human life has now no common principle, no common ideas, no common aim. Individualism rules throughout society; each man has his own views, and follows his own purposes; so that the body politic, which ought to be working harmoniously in all its parts, is given up to virtual anarchy and confusion.

Philosophy and religion have both attempted to remedy these evils, but in vain. Sensationalism and idealism, though presenting many a fine-spun theory, have been practically worthless; moral systems have proved equally empty and futile. Religion, though it has done its part, yet has never assumed its highest form—that in which the spiritual is made to bear upon the material interests of mankind. The real gospel of social happiness has yet to be proclaimed.

The true philosophy, as also the true religion for man, is to be sought for *historically*; to find it, we must attempt to deduce the law of human development, both as regards religion and society; in this way only can we interpret the past, comprehend the present, and predict the future. Whatever elements, moral, intellectual, or religious, we find operating upon human nature in the progress of its development, these are the *real* elements with which philosophy has to do.

St. Simon's doctrine, therefore, gives a philosophy of *minds*, rather than of *mind*; it presents a science of humanity as a whole, rather than of human nature in its isolation. This *principle* is one to which no real objection, that we are aware, can be made; nay, we regard it as a most important branch of philosophy, to trace the mental progress of mankind in the world. All the mysticism attaching to it in the present instance arises from the enthusiasm with which the law of development was proclaimed, as a divine discovery of the new prophet, and as a substitute for all philosophy, all politics, and all religion for the future.

And what, then, is the law of development, by which humanity marches onward to perfection? Society, according to St. Simon, has shown two great phases or epochs, which, in long cycles, have alternated with each other. The one is the *organic* epoch, the other the *critical*. Under the former, society is always bound together by some general law—all its facts regulated by some great theory. Under the latter, all law and theory is broken up; unity of action ceases; and individual interests go on clashing with each other. This alternation has already taken place *twice* in the history of humanity. The ancient pagan period was an organic state; the breaking up of paganism the critical. This led to the second organic period, by the consolidation of human opinion under the power of the Catholic Church; while the second critical epoch, commencing with the Reformation, found its climax in the French Revolution. St. Simon considered himself raised up to announce the advent of a *third* organic period, now just at hand, in which war, confusion, discord, shall all cease, and man be united by the triple bond of a moral, intellectual, and industrial perfection.

The same law of progress, which history shows us on the broad surface of human society, is seen under another point of view, in the successive features of man's religious belief. Religion has appeared under four different aspects; that of Fetishism, of Polytheism, of Monotheism, and lastly St. Simonism. Under the reign



of Fetishism, cruelty and fear reigned universally throughout society—it was the age of cannibalism, man devouring man, society preying on itself. Polytheism was an advance upon this state of barbarity;—the sentiment of humanity began to dawn;—slavery took the place of Islamism, and the foundations of the social edifice became visible. Monotheism, both Jewish and Christian, succeeded. Slavery now gave way to national institutions; the spirit of *love* began to expand itself over society at large, and the principle of selfishness to be resisted. Christianity, however, while accomplishing these glorious results, has chiefly aimed at the spiritual education of man, and has not yet operated directly upon the building up of his social and temporal happiness. So far from that, the spiritual and material are put into a state of antagonism by it; which, however necessary as a critical era in the progress of truth, yet gives rise to a thousand immediate evils. We await, then, the last and perfect organic form of the religious life in the world; that in which the temporal and material interests of man shall be blended in one, and social life find its perfection in the full expansion of religious truth. In this state of society there will be a due provision for education, legislation, and religious worship. Every man must be a producer, and every class of producers must have its own proper sphere of action. Priests of religion, men of science, and the industrial classes, these will form the whole mass of society. The most eminent of the three divisions will form the aristocracy—the whole together will form at once the church and the state; and the great principle of action will be, *each man according to his capacity, and each capacity according to its work*. Such are the broad outlines of the St. Simonian dictrines.\* Inadmissible as they appear in their original form, they have, notwithstanding, proved very suggestive to many active minds; and stand, in fact, at the vestibule of a school of social inquiry, which is now actively engaged in bringing forth many remarkable results.

The social system which now holds by far the most prominent place in France, is that of Charles Fourier, (born 1772, died 1837.) It is a very common, but a very erroneous opinion, that Fourier's system sprang from the St. Simonian doctrines. It is well known, on the contrary, that the main points of it were clearly developed in the mind of the author so early as the year 1779; and in the year 1808 he published his "*Théorie de quatre Mouvements*," which

\* Abundant materials exist in France for studying the St. Simonian system. The best works to consult are, "*Doctrine de St. Simon*," (Paris, second edit. 1829,) and an "*Exposition de la Doctrine Saint-Simonienne*," 2 vols.



was many years before St. Simon had produced the least impression upon the world. The fact is, that many of the St. Simonian school, after the death of the founder, adopted portions of Fourier's phraseology, and that, at the dissolution of it, some of the ablest writers came over to the other system. This may, probably, have given rise to the notion, that the phalansterian doctrines were affiliated upon the St. Simonian.

For many years after the publication of his first work, Fourier excited no attention; his only friend and follower was M. Just Muiron, who, impressed with the grandeur of his views of society, entered warmly with him into the task of propagating them. In 1822 Fourier published his "Théorie de l'Unité Universelle," which was succeeded by the "Nouveau Monde Industriel et Sociétaire," and "La fausse Industrie." These works, though giving a very full and even learned exposition of his doctrines, yet are written in a style so strange, and a technology so unusual, that it is not to be wondered at that they produced but little effect upon the public at large. Fortunately for the credit of the system, it succeeded in engaging the eloquent pen of M. Victor Considérant; to him were added from the ranks of the St. Simonians, M. Abel Transon and M. Jules Le Chevalier. After the death of Fourier, accordingly, in 1837, the school began to organize itself; and the doctrines it maintained began to spread amongst many thinking minds in France. A journal entitled "La Phalange," which had been instituted in 1836, advocated, and still advocates the views of the society with great spirit; and within the last year or two a daily paper, "La Démocratie Pacifique," has been entirely devoted to its principles and interests. The school is at this moment, we believe, greatly on the increase: the "bulletins" for the last three years show, at any rate, a vast accession both of money and men.\*

Our readers may now be interested to understand something of a system, which confessedly constitutes a "great fact" in the literary history of the present day; for although it appears prominently as a *social theory*, yet being grounded in metaphysical principles, it can be viewed, strictly speaking, as a complete system of philosophy.

First of all, then, according to Fourier, it must be admitted that

\* An attempt was made to introduce the system into England by Mr. Doherty, who published for a short time the "London Phalanx." While this has disappeared in England, the literature has been vastly increasing in France. I have before me a catalogue of more than thirty separate works, advocating the phalansterian system.

reason is to man an *organ of truth*. Without this admission, all philosophy, nay, all human knowledge, is worthless. But reason grasps not truth at once. Starting from a few fundamental principles it makes many tentative efforts, falls into many errors, and yet in the main advances. So it was, for example, in *astronomy*, until the true law of gravitation was established, when all became plain. So it is with regard to *soci  ty*; theories of socialism can be only tentative until the real law of human nature is eliminated; but then society will become harmonious.

As the foundation of all science, we must raise our minds to the contemplation of *God*. Everything within and around us proclaims the existence of a supreme being of infinite intelligence, wisdom, and goodness. From him all creation has flowed forth; and all must, therefore, bear upon it the impress of his own divine and harmonious mind. Experience proves that this is the case, for nature is full of harmony. Music is a manifestation of divine harmony; the colors of the spectrum afford us another manifestation of it; wherever we look, the same great feature of the divine nature is exhibited.\*

Man was made in the image of God; he is the mirror of the universe. As such, there must be in human nature at once the purest harmony, and the highest unity. To suppose otherwise, would be absolutely derogatory to the wisdom, the power, or the beneficence of the Creator. Evil, it is true, *exists*, but this may be easily explained. Suppose a mechanic to construct a beautiful machine, and some bungling workmen were to throw it into confusion, should we say that the fault were in the machine, or in the ignorance of the workmen? Of course the latter. So it is with humanity. As made by God, it is a perfect and harmonious construction; and the source of all evil is to be sought for in that wide-spread ignorance, which, without comprehending human nature aright, throws it into false positions, and puts all its fine-strung harmonies into discord.†

The great thing, then, is to study *man*:—to study him by the purest light of our reason; to bring to bear on the investigation all we know of God, the Creator, and all the analysis of creation at large. The study of man comprehends two fields of research,—that of his *history*, and that of his *constitution*. History shows

\* See "Nouveau Monde Indust." p. 445. Also, "Solidarit  ," by Hippolyte Renaud, chaps. ii. and viii. Throughout all his works, Fourier draws frequent illustrations from *music*, to which he had been early passionately attached.

† "Solidarit  ," p. 25.

us humanity passing through a succession of phases, answering to the *infancy, youth, adolescence, virility, and old age* of the individual, and termed by Fourier, *Edénisme, Sauvagerie, Patriarcat, Barbarie, Civilisation*. In these several eras, we see the principle of union gradually developing in connection with the rise of the arts and sciences.

The next step in human progress, must be that in which the present system of individualism prevalent through society shall be broken up; in which the true law of society shall be discovered; in which men shall find their highest interest and happiness in the public weal; in which the happiness of the individual and the community shall be absolutely identified. This state is termed that of *harmony*.\*

To understand this state, and the means of attaining it, we must become acquainted with man in his nature and constitution. Upon the knowledge of these, Fourier's whole social system depends. Man is in himself a trinity, a compound of three principles.†

1. The Passions—Active or motive principle.
2. The Body—Passive principle.
3. Intelligence—Regulative or mathematical principle.

The *body* is the mere organ or tool of the man. *Intelligence* gives the rules or laws of all movement; and the *passions* are the sole causes which impel the will to action.‡ The real man, then, is to be studied in the *will*, and in all the passions (*i. e.* motives) which determine it; to understand man, therefore, aright, we must endeavor to grasp the whole of the principles of his activity, and comprehend the mechanism of his passions.

These have been discussed by Fourier with great acuteness and precision. As there are three parts of the human constitution, so, he considers, there are three classes of passions, representing three ruling tendencies or attractions. 1. There is the tendency to physical enjoyment, (*tendance au luxe*), and this is satisfied through the sensitive passions; namely, taste, smell, sight, hearing, touch. 2. There is the tendency in man to form into groups with his fellow-man: this tendency is supplied by the affective passions, which are friendship, ambition, love, and domesticity. 3. There is the tendency to series or rank. Men not only form into groups, but different groups seek to attain a different rank or standing in society, thus creating a regular system of *series* or degrees from

\* "Nouveau Monde," secs. vi. and vii.

† "Solidarité," p. 38.

‡ The term *passion* is used by Fourier to signify any inward motive whatever.

the lowest to the highest. This tendency is served by three passions—emulation, agreement, and diversity; for men of different ranks will stand affected to others by rivalry, by sympathy in their views, or by the love of change. These are termed by Fourier, “la Cabaliste, la Composite, and la Papillonne”—forming the distributive, as the others formed the affective passions. The whole of these springs of action thus tend to create perfect harmony in society; for just as nature has taken care to balance the numbers of the sexes, so also does she distribute men of different tendencies in such a way, that the whole of the passions shall be in equilibrium, and perfect unity be the result, forming, as it is termed, the pivot around which the whole revolve.

The following table will give a clear idea of the whole analysis:—

PIVOT-PASSION.	GENERIC PASSIONS.	RADICAL PASSIONS.
Unity or Harmony.	$\alpha$ Tendency to Luxury or physical enjoyment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Taste.</li> <li>2. Smell.</li> <li>3. Sight.</li> <li>4. Hearing.</li> <li>5. Touch.</li> </ol>
	$\beta$ Tendency to Groups.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Ambition.</li> <li>7. Friendship.</li> <li>8. Love.</li> <li>9. Domesticity.</li> </ol>
	$\gamma$ Tendency to Ranks or Series.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Rivalry.</li> <li>11. Concord.</li> <li>12. Diversity.</li> </ol>
		<p>Sensitive.</p> <p>Affective.</p> <p>Distributive.</p>

Of these twelve radical passions, the four affective are the cardinal, like the four notes in the octave, which form the main chords; the three distributive answer to the other three notes, which form the subordinate chords; while the five sensitive, answer to the five semi-tones, which complete the twelve parts of the chromatic scale.\*

Such, then, are the elements of human nature, such the materials with which society has to be constructed; we can now proceed, therefore, to discover the *organization* of social life. Humanity is at present like a splendid organ, entirely out of tune. Harmony exists not, for each man is individualized in his interests, and stands in a kind of antagonism to all the rest. Moral purity exists not; for the passions not having their natural sphere of action, become contorted or extravagant, and lead into every species of crime. Happiness and liberty exist not; for of what use is it to have freedom inscribed upon the parchments of the empire, when the man is a slave to a labor, which is totally at

\* Vid. *Solidarité* p. 47.



variance with his tastes and attractions? For the passions to exist in a state of harmony and equilibrium, society must be constructed on rational and philosophical principles; each attraction must have its satisfaction, and the tendency to vice must be repelled, and overcome, not by punishment and restraint, but by the happiness each man will find in following out his proper destination.

A community of 400 families, comprehending about 1800 souls, is considered by Fourier sufficient to carry out his plan of society. Such a community he terms a *Phalange*, and the palace in which they reside a *Phalanstère*. The *Phalange* is to be built in a peculiar form, containing dwelling-houses of different sizes, gardens, workshops, and everything necessary for the conduct of social life. It is to stand in the centre of an area of about a league square, which is to be cultivated for the benefit of the community. The cattle, fruit, flowers, &c., which are reared on the estate, will supply the five senses with objects of satisfaction, and administer to the physical necessities of the inhabitants. Next, the affective passions are to be consulted. Friendships will be formed between those who have a natural attraction for each other, uninfluenced by the sordid motives which society now presents. Ambition will find an ample field for exertion, and men will unite into groups to carry out their plans. Love will unite the sexes in perfect harmony, when all selfish interests in the shape of property, &c., cease to be consulted. And, lastly, the family circle will have all its charms without its anxieties and its cares. Such will be the primary grouping of mankind, when these affections are left to their natural play.

But now the distributive passions will come into play. Men have different tastes. Some will follow agriculture, some gardening, some commerce, some domestic duties, while others will choose education, literature, science, or religion, as their favorite employment. Every man will be at liberty to enter whatever group he pleases, or to change his occupation as often as he may desire; but assuredly, as every man finds his happiness alone in activity, he will do *something*, where everything lies open to his choice. Some will be incited by *rivalry*, others by *sympathy*, while all may enjoy *variety*. The property of the community will consist of capital, labor, talent. These will all be rewarded proportionally to their value; the whole community will partake of the benefit of what each member affords and a state of harmony will ensue, which, while it gives employment and support to all, will excite all to emulation, and give a

stimulus to commerce, science, and literature, such as, under the present state of things, it is utterly impossible to realize. Diversity of rank there must ever be; for while there is harmony in nature, there is no such thing as *equality*. Every man, however, will have the opportunity of realizing wealth, honor, esteem, and even power, exactly in proportion to his talent and his industry.

It is vain for us to attempt entering into the details of the Phalansterian community. Doubtless they must appear very utopian, as here described; but the genius and benevolence of the author of the system, certainly afford good reason for giving an attentive ear to his suggestions, since much may often be learned even from a theory which appears to be only dictated by the boldest enthusiasm.

Fourier, to complete his philosophy, carried his principles at length into the highest regions of human thought. Under the title of "Cosmogony," he pushed his researches into the spiritual nature of man, showing his unity with God, and with the universe at large. Under the title of "Universal Analogy," he attempted to carry his laws of harmony into the various realms of nature; and thus to make discoveries which, to the method of induction, would have been forever *impossible*. Some of his school are now carrying on similar researches, and applying the numerical laws we have referred to, to the questions of physiology, language, and religion. Having just indicated, however, the main principles of his system, *as a philosophy*, we must be content to point out the works by which our readers may enter, if they choose, into the details of the Phalansterian doctrines.\*

Many of Fourier's doctrines upon cosmogony, upon the spiritual body in man, upon metempsychosis, upon the details of universal analogy, are, we believe, regarded, even by many of his followers, as extravagant and theosophic. It should be remembered, however, that he only put them forward as *speculations*, not as scientific facts. What he regards alone as strictly scientific, is his analysis of human nature, and his theory of social organization. On these subjects, however, there are some points very unsatisfactory. His doctrine of evil, though containing some truth, is far from probing the mischief to its centre. There is a perturbation in human nature which

\* The student of Fourier should begin by some of the simpler writings of the school, as the "Exposition Abrégée," of M. Considerant. He will be highly interested by M. Cantagrel's Dialogues, entitled "Le Fou du Palais Royal." The best synthetical view of the system, is that entitled "Solidarité," by M. Renaud. After these works, he may proceed to the writings of Fourier himself, particularly the "Nouveau Monde Industriel." A life of Fourier has been written by M. Charles Pellarin.

needs a Divine cure, before holiness and happiness can result from its being left to the play of its natural attractions. I know we must separate, as Bishop Butler does, between the original constitution of man by God, and his superadded sinful tendencies; but those tendencies demand something more potent than a Phalanstère, to bring the heart right, and purify the conscience. Till this is done, society may present an outward paradise, but there will be all the elements of hell itself within the soul. Another point that wants great consideration is the analysis of the passions. If that be imperfect, the credit of the whole system is broken down. But we are not yet prepared to admit that the science of human nature has been at once begun and completed in the person of Fourier. That he merits the title of great genius and great philanthropy, must be admitted; but he has added only *his* portion to the noble edifice of human science. Much that he has written will pass away into oblivion; but the truth he uttered (and he uttered much) will mingle up with the mass of our knowledge, when the system, as a whole, has vanished forever, like a splendid dream.

In the above sketches of St. Simon and Fourier, we have given the two main social systems of modern times. As schools of philosophy, they are both marked by the use that is made of the historical element. Both have regarded mankind as being in a state of perpetual progress; and it is this idea of progress (one which is also shared by the Eclectic school) which has given a distinctive feature to every system, that has aimed primarily at illustrating the philosophy of social life. On the contrary, the theological school we have described under the title of Scepticism, advocating, for the most part, the doctrines of absolute power, have rejected the idea of progress, as involving all the errors of pantheism in theology, and radicalism in politics; and maintained the existence of a fixed and unalterable standard of eternal truth.

There is a class of writers, however, which take their stand midway between these two ideas. Convinced, on the one hand, of the reality of human progress, still they recognize the existence of a body of traditional truth, which has come down upon the stream of time, from the earliest ages to the present day. Of these writers, some regard the traditionary element as being *the universal consent of mankind*, of whatever period or of whatever religion; others, on the contrary, regard it as belonging more particularly to the Christian revelation, either in its preparatory forms or its subsequent development; but both unite in recognizing the re-



ality of *progress* as the law of human nature. The former of these schools is represented by M. Pierre Leroux ; the latter, by M. Buchez.

M. Pierre Leroux was one of the ardent and aspiring minds who studied first in the school of St. Simon. In 1824 he became one of the originators and first editors of "The Globe ;" and it was probably owing to his influence, that that remarkable journal savored for some time so strongly of the St. Simonian doctrines. Since the disappearance of St. Simonism, M. Leroux has assumed an independent position, attempting to centre in himself, as far as possible, the results of the eclectic psychology, the traditional element of the catholic philosophy, and the historical speculations of the sociologists—a position truly of no little difficulty, but one which his metaphysical acumen, and his universal learning, eminently qualified him to assume.

About the year 1833 he commenced, in conjunction with M. Renaud, the composition of the "Encyclopédie Nouvelle," (as yet incomplete,) in which many of his philosophical and religious opinions are somewhat fully developed. Since then, there have appeared from his pen, a "Réfutation de l'Eclecticisme," in which he has attempted to develop the true idea of philosophy ; an "Essai sur l'Egalité," in which he defines and illustrates the modern notion of humanity, as being one united organization of labor and interest ; a little treatise entitled "De la Doctrine du Progrès Continu," and, finally, an elaborate work "De l'Humanité, de son Principe, et de son Avenir."\* It is from this last work, as being the résumé of his former opinions, that I shall give the following account of his philosophical stand-point.

The great object of M. Leroux's philosophy is *Man*. It attempts to determine what he is, what is his destination, what his rights, what his duties, and what his law. The psychological schools of philosophy since Descartes have labored at these questions, but labored unsuccessfully. Their point of departure has always been *the me* ; in this they have expected to find all truth embodied ; to the individual reason they have applied for the solution of every fundamental problem. To say that their labors have been altogether vain, would be incorrect, for many results have been gathered up on the way ; but still they have totally failed of getting upon any solid ground, or of educing any satisfactory result.

\* M. Leroux is also united with M. Duvoy in the editorship of the "Revue Indépendant."



What, in fact, is *the me*, what is the individual reason? A mere abstraction, a fiction of philosophy, which has no real existence.\* No man can regard *self* as an independent creation, containing an independent revelation of truth. Every separate mind, and every individual reason, only exists as part of a vast whole, as a link in that great series, the totality of which we call *humanity*. The thoughts, feelings, beliefs, principles, which each man recognizes in himself, do not spring up originally in his individual mind; he receives them as a part of the universal truth of mankind. Had he lived earlier, he would have had other thoughts; those who live later, will have others again. The *me*, then, or the individual man, must hold a very subordinate place in the investigations of philosophy; the great point is to study *mankind*, to know what it has been, what it is, what it will be hereafter.

This investigation, according to M. Leroux, all comes under *the science of life*. The individual reason may discover formal or mathematical truth; but to study *man*, we must cast our gaze upon the whole flow of *human life*; and here only can we make discoveries which can be of any value as elucidating his nature and destination. The origin of humanity lies beyond our reach, the end lies equally beyond it. All we see is a certain number of links in the centre of a series, of which we know neither the commencement nor termination, and these form the whole material of our scientific research. The direct object of philosophy, therefore, is to gain a complete view of the catholic tradition of mankind, so far as history can reach; secondly, to determine its progress in the past; and, thirdly, from this to deduce its continued progress for the future.†

M. Leroux having thus explained the nature and objects of philosophy, takes the individual man as his starting point, and as being to us the necessary link with humanity at large. And what is the individual man? A being alone in time and space, isolated from all the other creation? Is he an animal only? or is he a soul? None of these definitions or ideas will come near the truth. What shall we say then? "L'homme n'est ni une âme, ni un animal; l'homme est un animal transformé par la raison, et uni à l'humanité."‡ The ancients defined man as a social and political animal, and so far they were correct; but history since then has taught us more. It has taught us that man is perfectible, that so-

\* "De l'Humanité," p. 113.

† *Vid.* "Da la Doct. du Progrès Humain."

‡ "De l'Humanité," p. 120.

ciety is perfectible, that the human race is perfectible. It has taught us that by social combination the evils of the world may be overcome, that all the antagonism of society may cease, and that the interests of all may become solidified in the very structure of social life. This alone can bring about human happiness, and this has been the very point to which society is ever tending. "Yes," exclaims our author, "Plato says truly—We gravitate to God, attracted by him who is the sovereign beauty, by the loving and rational instinct of our nature. But just as the bodies placed on the surface of our earth do only gravitate towards the sun all together, and as the attraction of the earth is, so to say, only the centre of their mutual attraction; so we gravitate spiritually to God, by the intervention of humanity."\* Such is the compendium of the whole history of philosophy.

In prosecution of these views, M. Leroux has devoted himself with great ardor and learning to historical research. He has investigated the relics of ancient tradition, labored to gather up the testimony of mankind in all ages upon the idea of God, of immortality, and a future life; and attempted to show that Christianity is the regular development of the catholic truth of the world upon these points. As, however, the law of progress still remains in force, the conceptions of Christianity will give way to a more perfect religion. What the future will be we are at present ignorant; but we are laboring for it. The tradition of Europe will be handed down to the next generation, and as is ever the case, the science of the present will become the basis of the religion of the future.

Such are the main ideas of the philosophy now under review. Like the system of St. Simon and of Fourier, it looks only upon the more outward features of human nature; expects the creation of a state of earthly bliss from the improved arrangements of human society; passes by the real elements of evil and of suffering which lie deep in the core of the human heart; and, in consequence, mistakes the whole nature, genius, purport, grandeur, and divinity of Christianity. So far as such speculations bear upon social life, they assume a genial, a benevolent, and a beneficial aspect; they teach us what Christianity has taught them—the principles of charity, peace, and human brotherhood. But they comprehend not the deep philosophy of the Christian revelation, which aims at the regeneration of society, only through the regeneration of the human soul. In brief, neither of the three systems

\* "De l'Humanité," p. 120.

we have reviewed, can be honestly cleared of the charge of *pantheism*; and hence they virtually involve the fatalistic conclusions to which all pantheism inevitably leads.

M. Buchez, like Pierre Leroux, had his philosophical ability first awakened in the school of St. Simon, and, like him also, has since its disruption assumed an independent position. Like all the minds which received their first impulse from the doctrines of sociology, he has taken his stand upon the idea of human progress, and sought for the solution of his philosophical problems from the phenomena of history. In his "*Essai d'un Traité de Philosophie*," he attempted to explain every great philosophical question from a moral point of view, considering that they find here their most satisfactory solution. It is, however, in his "*Introduction à la Science de l'Histoire*," that he has pursued his own peculiar doctrines with the greatest fulness and originality.

In the prolegomena to that work, he begins by giving a picture of the evils under which mankind is now groaning, and shows that it is the province of history to reveal the real function of human society. In the first book he enters at once upon the *science* of history, which is defined to be "that which enables us to see the social future of the human race in the order of its free activity." This science turns upon two ideas: 1. That of humanity, and 2. That of *progress*. Humanity, philosophically viewed, is the *function* of universal order, the highest expression of the Divine ideas. Progress is the *law* of universal order, a process in the nature of man analogous to that which we see in every part of the whole creation.

The second book brings us to the *method* in which the science of history is to be pursued. A valid science may be said in any case to exist, when we have so far discovered the law of the case, as to foresee the future with precision and certainty. This leads to a very full and acute discussion of the law of the generation of social facts, in the determination of which he has brought to his aid the notion of progress, the logical development of ideas, and the tendential movements of society.

The third book is on social *constants*, those great features of humanity which remain ever the same amidst the perpetual changes of human opinion. These refer to *morals*—the Divine law of our free activity to art, to science, and to *labor*.

The fourth book is one of great interest; referring to the affiliation of all the different branches of human knowledge, and showing



how the idea of progress may be made the basis of a complete Encyclopædic arrangement of them.

The fifth book is occupied with speculations on the origin and natural history of the globe we inhabit, while the last two books, entitled "Androgenie," discuss the creation of man and the different revelations by which he has been instructed by God, and rendered fit for the high destiny to which he has been called.

This may give a general idea of the plan and the purport which M. Buchez has kept before him in this remarkable work. While on the one side the idea of progress is his guiding star, yet it is evident, from his general style of remark, that he has been led near to the Catholic doctrines of Christianity, and finds in them the germ of all the notions which it is the aim of philosophy to evolve from the phenomena of universal history. The method of philosophical investigation thus determined, has been pursued by several other writers of considerable ability. M. J. F. A. Boulland has followed it up by an "Essai d'Histoire Universelle, ou Exposé comparatif des Traditions de tous les Peuples," and a similar work, entitled "Histoires des Transformations Religieuses et Morales des Peuples." Dr. Ott also, to whom we have before referred as a commentator upon Hegel, has joined himself to this school in his "Manuel d'Histoire Universelle."

The only additional author we shall notice as belonging to the modern school of French mysticism, is M. Ballanche. This voluminous writer was born at Lyons, in 1776, and during the first twenty years of his life was the almost constant prey of the most painful afflictions. Endowed by nature with a mind of high sensibility, warmed by the rays of a vivid imagination, and chastened in spirit by the cup of suffering, M. Ballanche gradually developed a character of singular excellence and beauty. During his earlier years of literary activity, he devoted himself almost entirely to poetry, or the higher order of sentimental prose composition; but about the time of the Restoration, he was led, probably by the political circumstances of the country, into the region of philosophical thinking. Besides the prolegomena to some of his poetical writings, he has developed his views on the philosophy of society in two distinct works, the one entitled an "Essai sur les Institutions Sociales," the other entitled "La Palingénésie Sociale."

In the former of these works he treads in the footsteps of M. de Bonald, regarding *language* as a primitive revelation from God, and containing the primary germs of all truth. To this theory of



M. de Bonald, however, he has appended the idea of *progress*. The primitive tradition, couched in words, presented truth in a very material and symbolical form, and it was only preserved and spread by the ancient myths and poems, by which the early tribes handed down their wisdom from age to age. After a time, writing was invented. Truth now became, as it were, embalmed in signs; and just in proportion as it lost its character of poetic inspiration, it gained in reflective clearness and certainty. Now, truth is not only spoken and written, but is also *printed*. Here, again, it is held up still more distinctly to the contemplation of the *reason*, which still struggles on to comprehend the ideas which lie about it, and will continue to do so till it brings them into the broad daylight of a philosophical deduction. The great mission of these ages in which we live, is so to interpret the revelation which we have in the Christian tradition, that it may mould all the features of human society, and bring humanity to a state of purity and peace.

The "*Palingénésie Sociale*" also advocates a primitive revelation, and shows how man has departed from his original state of purity, the golden age of the poets, into a state of sin and consequent suffering. The plan of God, developed through the ages, is to restore man to his original state, to perfect him by means of the perfection of his social institutions, until the law of the Gospel becomes the law of the whole world.

"Then shall the reign of *mind* begin on earth,  
And, starting forth as from a *second birth*,  
Man, in the sunshine of the world's new spring,  
Shall walk transparent like some holy thing."

Thus we see M. Ballanche holds the balance almost evenly between the theological school of De Maistre and Bonald on the one side, and between the progression—and perfectionists on the other. "He is, in fact," remarks M. Damiron, "of the same faith as M. de Maistre, but of altogether different feelings; having greater tenderness for his brethren, greater sympathies, and better hopes. If he has not indeed the wing of the eagle, still he is without its stern look, its pitiless cry, its thunder ever ready to strike. In a region less high, but more serene and calm, he goes like the dove, scattering ever on his way sentiments which do not trouble, and words which console. In his eyes humanity is not destined *never* to be good except by fractions, to have eternally its plebeians and patricians, its weak and strong, its righteous and wicked; from day to day it will extend the circle of its influence, and will evangelize

the multitude, and at last will be entirely good and happy.”\* Such, according to M. Ballanche, is the origin of truth, as far as man is concerned ; such is its republication, such its progress, and such its final issue.

### SECT. III.—*Modern Mysticism in Germany.*

Germany is a country in which mysticism has ever found a somewhat congenial resting place. Religious mysticism, for example, has often exhibited there some of its most remarkable phases. Even Luther himself, the great religious hero of the country, may be said to have shown a decided tendency to it in several features of his character ; and modern times have not wanted instances still more marked and decisive. It is not our intention, however, to dwell, even for a moment, upon the *purely religious* mysticisms of Germany, as this would carry us too far from the proposed object of the present history ; our purpose will be simply to delineate, as clearly as possible, the *philosophical* mysticism which that country has originated during the present century. This course is rendered the more satisfactory, because philosophy and theology, in Germany, more than in any other part of the world, delight to go hand in hand ; so that mysticism in religion, as it exists there, is for the most part but the application of philosophical mysticism to theological questions.

In describing any particular department of the modern philosophy of Germany, we must always revert to the Kantian period, as that from which it has taken either its origin or its chief tendencies. In order to carry our readers back, then, for a moment, to that period, we would remind them, that Kantism contained in it a twofold element. On the one hand, Kant admitted the objective validity of our sense-perceptions ; and herein consisted his realism : on the other hand, he made all the peculiar features of these perceptions dependent upon the subjective laws of our own understanding ; and herein consisted his idealism. The expansion of the idealistic element we have followed through the writings of Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and the respective schools to which they gave rise ; the realistic element, on the contrary,\* was that upon which Jacobi linked his speculations, and from which he originated his profound system of philosophical mysticism. It is from this system

\* Damiron's "*Histoire de Phil.*" vol. ii. p. 368.

that all the German mysticism of the nineteenth century, which is worthy of notice, has regularly flowed.

Frederick Henry Jacobi was born at Düsseldorf, on the 25th of January, 1743. In the eighteenth year of his age he went to Geneva, and studied under some of the most celebrated professors in the different departments of mathematics, medicine, and philosophy. On his return to Düsseldorf, his first object was to devote himself to the mercantile profession; but being soon after appointed to an office under government, he gave himself up for the most part to public affairs, residing at a country-seat at Pempelfort, and occupying his leisure hours in philosophical researches. Metaphysical speculation was always his favorite employment—an employment, too, which, far from viewing as a mere amusement, he entered into with the most intense earnestness.\* Prompted by his love for philosophy, and justified by his position in society, he entered into extensive correspondence with many of the first scholars and writers of the age; and this fact, perhaps, may in some measure account for the wide and rapid influence of his literary productions.

As an author, it was never Jacobi's intention to develop any connected system of philosophy; his works are all of a brief and somewhat temporary character (*Gelegenheitschriften*), to which he was impelled by circumstances, rather than induced by the systematic development of his speculative opinions.†

His first publication consisted of a series of letters on Spinoza, addressed to his friend Moses Mendelssohn (1785). To this Mendelssohn replied, and thus drew forth from Jacobi a second publication, intended to establish his statements respecting both the fatalism and atheism of Spinoza's principles, and to vindicate the assertion he had made, that every system of logical dogmatism inevitably tends to the same point. In the next year (1786), Jacobi wrote a treatise, entitled *David Hume—on Faith, or Idealism and Realism*,\* a treatise which we may compare with Reid's polemical writings, taking due account of the different schools to which the Scottish and the German opponent of scepticism belonged. The immediate object of this work, however, was to answer the outcry which had been raised against him, for the assertion he had made, that all our knowledge must rest *ultimately* upon faith, and *not* upon reasoning. In 1799, he published some letters to Fichte, in which he opposed

\* It is recorded that the perusal of Kant's tractate on the proofs for the being of a God, produced in the young philosopher the most violent palpitation of the heart.

† "Werke," vol. iv. Preface.

the "empty formalism" of his philosophy; another treatise, "On Divine Things," and various articles in the philosophical journals, complete the list of his strictly metaphysical labors. A perfect edition of Jacobi's works in six volumes was published, partly from his own direction, by his friend Friedrich Köppen, containing, besides the above-mentioned treatises, two philosophical romances, an interesting selection of the author's correspondence with Hamann, and an introduction to his philosophy by the editor.

Jacobi came just at the period when some attempt at founding a mystical philosophy was naturally to be expected. The energetic idealism of Kant had swept away, after a manful struggle, the pretensions of empiricism, throughout the whole country; and, not content with that, had given a manifest opening to the revival of a profound scepticism, such as we have already noticed in Schulze. Sensationalism, idealism, and scepticism, therefore, had all three been engaged in the struggle to which the giant of Königsberg gave occasion; and now mysticism stepped in to assert its claims also to the reverence and the confidence of mankind. Hamann had, some time before, attempted to found a system of faith-philosophy, and Herder to graft his results upon the metaphysics of Locke; but it was Jacobi who first brought the faith-philosophy into repute, and, by his profound genius, as well as elegant taste, raised it to a position, in which it was enabled to contest the supremacy with the other philosophies of the age and country.

One of the first things we observe in the writings of Jacobi, is his deep-rooted aversion to those formal rationalistic systems of metaphysics, for which Germany, especially, had been famous. He assailed the Wolfian school, the pantheism of Spinoza, and all other dogmatical systems of a similar kind, with a force and perseverance amounting almost to rancor. To comprehend the method of this opposition, is by no means a difficult matter. All knowledge, he affirmed, communicated to us through the medium of the understanding, (or the logical faculty,) must be of a contingent character, and can never attain the marks of the universal, the infinite, the purely philosophical. To *demonstrate* any truth, we must infer it from another, that lies beyond it; this, again, from another still more general; and so on, to an infinite series. The human *understanding*, therefore, can never get beyond a series of conditions; it can never rise to first principles; never reach that point where truth is known, and gazed upon by a direct intuition of the soul. Hence, he shows that the philosophy which is grounded



simply on the understanding, and which attempts to define and demonstrate all things, necessarily leads to fatalism. The philosophy of Spinoza he regards as the complete type of these demonstration-seeking systems—systems which can never really transcend the finite and the conditioned—never attain to the absolute and real; and, consequently, never consistently admit a Deity, except in that pantheistic sense, which regards God as the totality of finite and conditioned existence.

"It has been," he remarks, "since the time of Aristotle, the increasing striving of all philosophical schools, to make immediate knowledge secondary to mediate; to make the original perceptive capacity, which grasps all things directly, secondary to the reflective capacity, which is conditioned by abstraction; to make the prototype secondary to the type—the essence to the definition—and intuition to understanding; yea, to make the former altogether vanish in the latter. Nothing is allowed to hold good by these philosophers, except what admits of being proved, yea, twice proved, by turns, in the intuition, and in the conception—in the thing itself, and in its image or its name; so that in this last alone the thing itself is supposed to lie, and to be really seen."\*

To these kind of remarks, the dry and formal definitions of the Leibnitzian-Wolfian philosophy had certainly given abundant occasion. It seemed to be imagined by the adherents of that school, that no sooner could anything be defined by the rules of logic, than its whole nature was determined. Jacobi, impressed by the folly of this procedure, opened a campaign against all dogmatical systems whatever, and, with great ingenuity, drew the conclusion, that a purely demonstrative philosophy, as it has no first principles to rest on, must lead to scepticism and absurdity.†

The philosophy of Kant he excepted from these sweeping objections, although he did not consider even this to be by any means fundamentally sound. He admitted, that that great thinker had effectually opposed the dogmatical systems of the day; that he had shown their futility, in his *theoretical* philosophy; and pointed out the road to truth, in his *practical*: but still he objected to him, that, having once admitted the validity of demonstration, and, by its means, having undermined the arguments on which our belief in God and immortality rests, he could not consistently restore by his practical movement what he had destroyed by his theoretical.

\* Michelet, "Geschichte der neuern Syst.," vol. i. p. 346. See also Jacobi's "Werke," vol. i. Introduction, p. 11, *et seq.*

† These results are brought out with great force in the "Letters on Spinoza."

It was evident to him, that some more fundamental principle was wanting; something to furnish a basis for Kant's demonstrations,\* and to give validity to his practical conclusions.† This principle, then, he asserted to be *faith*—the direct inward revelation of truth to the human mind.‡

The true idea, then, of Jacobi's philosophy lies here:—that all human knowledge, of whatever description, must rest, ultimately, on faith or *intuition*. As it regards sensible things, the understanding finds the impressions, from which all our knowledge of the external world flows, ready formed. The process of sensation itself is a mystery; we know nothing of it, till itself is past, and the feeling it produces is present. Our knowledge of matter, therefore, must rest entirely upon our faith in these intuitions. There is, however, another and a higher species of faith than this. Just as sensation gives us an immediate knowledge of the world, so there is an inward sense—a rational intuition—a spiritual faculty—by which we have a direct and immediate revelation of supersensual things. God, providence, freedom, immortality, moral distinctions, &c.—these are things which come not to us by demonstration. We gaze upon them by the inward eye; and have just as firm conviction of their reality, as we have of those material objects upon which we look with the bodily eye. It is by this twofold faith or revelation, that man has access to the whole material of truth—material which his understanding afterwards moulds into various shapes, and employs, on the one hand, for the purposes of this life; and, on the other, for preparation for the life to come. Leave out, however, this direct inlet to our knowledge, and all demonstration, all definition—in short, all philosophy is but a sport with words; a superstructure sometimes complete enough in itself, but baseless as the most airy visions of the imagination.‡

It may now be easily seen, how Jacobi linked his views of philosophy upon the realistic principle of Kant. Kant admitted, without proof, the reality of our perceptions: here, then, was the faith-principle already in operation, and only needed some additional fencing against the encroachment of the ideal element, to give it

\* "Werke," vol. ii. p. 17. *et seq.*

† In the earlier treatises which Jacobi wrote, (those which related more immediately to Spinoza,) he made constant use of the terms *Glaube* and *Offenbarung*, to designate the immediate knowledge we gain of primary truth, in opposition to that which is *logically* deduced. The use of these expressions first drew on him the charge of mysticism; but it is right to point out the fact, that he afterwards employed the term *Vernunft*, to express the faculty of immediate intuition, which he had before explained as a *revelation*. On his use of the term *Vernunft*, see "Werke," vol. ii. pp. 55–81.

‡ "Werke," vol. iv. *Die Lehre des Spinoza*, Pt. i.

its due weight and importance. While Kant, therefore, supposed the sense-perception to be a subjectively formed phenomenon, in which, not indeed the thing itself is represented, but simply the existence of an objective reality declared, Jacobi affirmed the object of our perceptions or of our faith, to be a real and adequate intuition of the outward reality; so that he completely fortified this part of our mental constitution against the sweeping results of the rising idealism. He showed, in brief, that in every perception there is something *actual* present (*Princip der Thatsächlichkeit*.) which can never be explained away into the operation of our own subjective laws and faculties.

From this principle of actuality in perception, Jacobi proceeded to establish the same with reference to the higher perceptions of the reason. Here, too, he had the example and authority of Kant for his method of procedure. Kant, it is true, in his *Critick of pure Reason*, had viewed both the understanding and the reason as simply formal or logical faculties, from which no actual material of knowledge could possibly come; and, on this ground, he removed the notions of God, of the soul, of substance, &c., as objective realities, beyond the bounds of philosophical truth. But he allowed the validity of those great moral conceptions of Deity, of immortality, and of rectitude, which come to us through the medium of the practical reason. To the latter principle, accordingly, Jacobi appealed. He contended, that the conclusions of the practical reason were as valid, philosophically, as those of the pure reason; and that the one was as much the organ of scientific truth as the other. Following out this mode of argument, he was led to view reason itself (*Vernunft*) as an inward sense—a direct revelation of spiritual things, upon the actuality of whose intuitions there is as much dependence to be placed as upon those of the senses.

In brief, Jacobi, at a time when idealism seemed preparing to sweep away all the great and recognized boundaries of human knowledge, stood forth as the apostle of realism—a realism which rested upon faith in our direct intuition of truth, whether human or divine. “He showed,” says Chalybäus, “that there is something more in our soul, than a dead and empty mechanism of logical thinking and shadowy representations; he reassured us of a deeper, and, as yet, an inviolable treasure in the human spirit; and, although this boon be hidden in the sevenfold veil of Isis, yet has he powerfully excited us to the investigation of it, by pointing to the reality of so precious a germ. He himself, indeed, thought, (and



herein lies his mysticism,) that, if we would not sport it away, we must preserve this germ, without exercising a sinful curiosity; that it happens to every one, who ventures to enter this sanctuary with the torch of demonstrative knowledge, as it did to the youth before the veiled image of Sais; for that every complete and scientific demonstration could only lead to Spinozism.”\*

Without entering more particularly into the details of Jacobi's philosophy, we shall conclude our remarks upon it by the following beautiful and significant passage from the pen of Hegel:—

“Jacobi,” he says, “is like a solitary thinker, who, in the morning of his day, found some ancient riddle, hewn upon an eternal rock. He believes in this riddle, but he strives in vain to guess it. He carries it about with him the whole day, allures weighty sentiments from it, spreads it out into doctrines and images, which delight the hearer, and inspire him with noble wishes and hopes; but the interpretation fails; and in the evening he lays him down, with the hope that some divine dream, or the next waking, will pronounce to him ‘*the word*’ for which he longs, and on which he has so firmly believed.”†

Jacobi's style of writing is so chastely poetical, and yet so philosophically accurate, that it has often been compared to that of Plato, and is regarded by many as a model for imitation. As a thinker, too, Jacobi is despised by none. Even the Hegelians themselves, so severely logical in their theory, and so supercilious towards those who disagree with it, have repeatedly acknowledged his services to the cause of philosophy. From Jacobi we must begin to date the introduction of a new element into the German metaphysics, that of *feeling*; an element which, if it had not been before altogether disowned, still had never been looked upon in the same manner as an organ of truth.‡

The path, however, being once pointed out, a number of philosophical thinkers, and some of no ordinary character, began to discuss more fully the respective claims of feeling and intelligence as sources of human knowledge. The relative position assigned to each was very different in the different systems which were now propounded: Some placed faith or feeling in the foreground,

\* “*Entwicklung*,” p. 45.

† “*Vermischte Schriften*,” vol. i. p. 203.

‡ As aids to understand Jacobi's philosophy aright, the student may consult the “*Introduction*,” printed in the second volume of his works; Schlegel's “*Charakteristiken und Kritiken*,” Hegel's review of his philosophy, contained in his “*Vermischte Schriften*,” Michelet's “*Geschichte*,” vol. i. p. 339; and Chalybäus' “*Entwicklung*,” Sec. iii.



as Jacobi most decidedly had done ; others made it only secondary. Some, again, tried to show how the two elements co-operated equally in the creation of our ideas ; others, to prove that they both flowed from the same fundamental principle. Of these, very few, of course, could be strictly termed followers of Jacobi, and even those few kept by no means close to their master ; the majority had belonged already to some other school, and being struck with the importance of many of Jacobi's ideas, were anxious to combine them with the principles they had before imbibed. Frederick Köppen and Jacob Salat are the only two we can at present recall, who may be properly termed the successors of Jacobi in the advocacy of his faith-philosophy ; the others must be regarded as seeking to unite this philosophy with that of Kant, of Fichte, or of Schelling ; oftentimes adding original suggestions of their own. In following, then, the fortunes of this new element of *feeling* (whose introduction upon the stage we have just shown), we shall notice three classes of advocates, whom we may characterize as grafting the faith-philosophy of Jacobi respectively upon the idealism of Kant, of Fichte, and of Schelling.

1. The writers to whom we ventured to give the appellation of Jacobian-Kantists, are Bouterwek, Krug, Fries, and Calker.

Bouterwek (born 1766, made professor at Göttingen 1791, died there 1828,) began his philosophical career just at the time when the writings both of Kant and Jacobi were in the flush of their fame. From the former he learned that there is a realistic ground which lies at the basis of all phenomena, and without which all thinking is simply a logical play upon empty terms and notions : from the latter he learned that, in addition to the external senses, there is an inward sense (whether it be termed faith or feeling) by which all real objective existence, of a spiritual or rational nature, is communicated to us. Hence he concluded that whether we direct our attention to thought or to feeling, there must be a real basis, a "seyn," from which they equally spring. This basis, he argued, can neither be found by thinking nor by feeling, as these are both subjective phenomena ; but there must be an absolute knowing-faculty (*Erkenntniss-vermögen*), by which it is immediately revealed to us, and out of which, as the ultimate ground, both thought and feeling spring forth. The science of this primitive faculty, and the knowledge which arises from it, Bouterwek terms *Apodiktik* (from *αποδεικνυμι*) ; an expression which he found it convenient to use, in order to make clear that primary fact of

consciousness, which bears the type neither of feeling nor thinking, but lies deep at the very foundation of both. In order to make this apodiktical starting point sufficiently broad, Bouterwek lays down three primary facts of consciousness to which it is to be applied, and these are *thought*, *knowledge*, and *action*. We have accordingly three divisions of Apodiktik, termed respectively, the logical, the transcendental, and the practical. In the logical Apodiktik, the author seeks the absolute basis or principle of thought *per se*, and shows that the very fact of thinking implies a *reality*, both in the subject and object. To investigate this *reality*, is the problem of the *transcendental* Apodiktik, the result of which is, that we must admit an absolute, a primary essence, as the constitutive principle of all things. This has been termed by some, a negative Spinozism.

The real nature of *the absolute*, lastly, is only found in the practical Apodiktik, which shows us that the most intimate and essential conception we can have of all *being*, is that of a *power*, or rather a *virtuality*, by the action and reaction of which all things consist. Such was the original philosophy of Bouterwek, as developed in his "Idee einer allgemeinen Apodiktik." In some of his late works he altered his views on the foundation principles of human knowledge, so as to bring them far nearer to the faith-philosophy of Jacobi. Throughout his whole career, indeed, he was floating in uncertainty between the two principles of faith and reflection; sometimes tending to the one, sometimes to the other, and ever struggling to discover some common ground which might unite the claims of both.\*

Bouterwek had placed thought and feeling very nearly upon an equality, varying as to the degree of preponderance he would assign to each. In the writings of Krug (born 1770, since 1808 Professor at Leipzig, died 1842), to whom we next advert, we have another instance of this kind of mixed metaphysical system. Krug began by attempting to furnish a new critical philosophy, in which the true method of metaphysical investigation should be better shown, and the full extent of the human faculties sounded. This was accomplished in a work, entitled "Sketch of a New Organum for Philosophy," published at Meissen, in 1801, in which he shows that

\* The chief philosophical work of Bouterwek may be considered that above mentioned, the "Idee einer allgemeinen Apodiktik," (1799.) The one of next importance is the "Lehrbuch der Philosophischen Wissenschaften," (1810.) The "Religion der Vernunft," (1824,) is interesting, as containing the most obvious modification of his original system.

true philosophy arises from turning our contemplation inwards, and searching into the facts of our own consciousness. In the consciousness, he affirms, subject and object, knowing and known, thought and existence, are *absolutely united*. Beyond this synthesis, as a fact of our own observation, we are unable to reach; for *there* is the ultimate bound of all metaphysical research. (Transcendentaler Synthetismus). Should it be attempted to penetrate beneath this fundamental fact, and deduce either knowing from being, or being from knowing, the only result which can follow will be materialism in the one case, and idealism in the other. The sole ground on which we can take our stand, is that of the following fixed and unalterable convictions:—first, that I am; secondly, that there is an existence out of myself; and, thirdly, that the two exist for each other. In this threefold conviction, all our absolute knowledge is grounded. In his next work, entitled “Fundamental Philosophy,” he develops more at large the nature of human knowledge, and draws the distinctions which he thinks warranted, between the various organs that subserve the acquisition of it. *Knowing*, he affirms, is conviction from objective grounds—believing, from subjective grounds. Knowing is the first degree of conviction, faith the second; while opinion is conviction of a still feebler kind.\*

Lastly, to probe this faith-principle to its foundation, he furnishes a new theory of the Feelings, (published 1823,) in which he attempts to show that feeling is the dim and undefined ground from which thought springs forth, and that it is by means of thought or reflection that the knowledge which feeling conveys is rendered clear and valid. The motto which he prefixes to this work well-nigh explains its whole theory.

Fühlen willst du? Wohlan! Es regt sich innerst im Herzen  
Jedes schöne Gefühl, stammend von oben herab,  
Doch vergiss nicht, dass auch von dorthier stammt der Gedanke,  
Funke der Gottheit, Gefühl! Funke der Gottheit, Vernunft!!

\* See Michelet, vol. i. p. 406.

† The following graphic sketch of Krug's philosophical life, in a religious point of view, is given by M. Amand Saintes, in his “Histoire Critique du Rationalisme,” p. 207.

“Fertile and earnest as a writer, Krug made use of all possible methods to extend the empire of Kant's philosophical ideas at the expense of the ancient faith. Speeches, articles, programmes, dissertations, dictionaries, manuals, all forms, and one might say all fashions, were employed to arrive at his purpose; for he did not even disdain satire when he judged it necessary to shut the mouth of his adversaries. He appeared, after a long life spent in struggles, to have earned some enjoyment of the fruit of his labors; but we are assured that his wounded self-love contemplates with bitter feeling a generation which no longer applauds with the same warmth his philosophical dissertations, \* \* \* and that he has not been insensible to the withering of his laurels.”



This last attempt of Krug opens the way for the philosophy of Fries (born 1773, since 1805 professor of philosophy at Heidelberg and Jena, died about 1844), in which the element of feeling again attains a predominance more nearly equal to what it held in the writings of Jacobi. The chief work of this author is entitled "A New Critique of Pure Reason" (published first in 1807), the object of which was to place the categories of Kant upon a fresh basis, and to show how they all spring forth from inward sense, or feeling. The position, accordingly, which Fries holds in the history of philosophical doctrines, is between Kant and Jacobi, with a predominant leaning to the latter. He admits, with Kant, that all our notions and conceptions, all that we properly term knowledge, (*Wissen*,) arises from our inward faculties, and, consequently, is purely subjective: on the other hand, he maintains, with Jacobi, that there is an inward faith-principle, to which all our thoughts and notions are secondary. The one he regards as fallible, and, consequently, unworthy our implicit confidence; the other he holds up as that sure and infallible organ of absolute truth, by which the real nature of things is made known to us.

The philosophy of Fries may be regarded fundamentally as a mixture of scepticism and idealism. His theory of certitude is purely subjective—his theory of truth simply the agreement of our ideas within themselves. So far he must be considered as assuming a sceptical position with regard to all objective reality. To avoid this result, however, he brings in, in addition to *Wissen*, other two principles of knowledge, termed *Glauben* and *Ahnung*. Knowledge simply comprehends the *phenomena* which we gain by means of sensation and understanding. Faith gives us an insight into the more intimate nature of things—raising us to the intuition of the true, the beautiful, the good, still only as subjective principles. That which he terms *Ahnung*, alone gives us any conception of these things as sublime objective realities.

The chief feature, then, in Fries' system (which he terms philosophical anthropology) is the attempt to draw thought and feeling into closer connection; to show that, instead of being entirely different phenomena, the one naturally arises from the other; that they both conspire to aid us in reading our own inward nature aright; and, *through that*, of understanding the nature of the world without. The opinions of Fries have perhaps gained the greatest fame through their application to theology.\* As we for-

\* The celebrated theologian, De Wette, has made much use of the philosophy of Fries, in the construction of his theological principles.



bear, however, as much as possible, to venture upon this ground, we pass on to the last of the names we have placed together under this sub-division, that, namely, of Calker.

Frederick von Calker (formerly private teacher at Berlin, since 1818 professor at Bonn) has brought the two elements of thought and feeling into complete union, so that the whole difference between them in his system altogether disappears, and the faith-philosophy becomes entirely sunk in the ordinary procedure of metaphysics. Like those whom we have before noticed, he appeals to consciousness, as being to us the foundation of all truth. In the consciousness we find three features of spiritual existence, namely, knowledge, action, and love; and, by the play of these three laws of our being, we are placed in close fellowship with the very nature and essence of things themselves, which fall under the three corresponding ideas of the true, the good, and the beautiful. The object of Calker is to exhibit the original laws (*Urgesetze*) by which these three ideas develop themselves, in all their fruitful results, to the human mind; in doing which, faith is not viewed either as the beginning or ending of philosophy, but is made absolutely identical with scientific knowledge.\*

In summing up, then, this movement of the philosophical mysticism of Germany, we must consider that it all results from the varied application of the two facts of logical thinking and inward faith, as they were furnished, the one by Kant, the other by Jacobi. In Krug, thought or reflection is the more prominent of the two, and plays decidedly the greater part in the creation of all human knowledge; in Bouterwek, the two elements as nearly as possible balance each other, the scale trembling alternately on either side; in Fries, the faith-principle becomes greatly predominant; whilst, lastly, in Calker, the distinction vanishes, and both facts are blended in one. Such are the attempts which have been made to complete the Kantian philosophy, by the introduction of mysticism; and if the results have not been entirely successful, yet they have called forth much truth, and may be looked upon as making one appreciable step in the march of philosophy.†

\* Calker's chief work is entitled "*Urgesetzlehre des Wahren, Guten, und Schönen, als Darstellung der Sogenannten Metaphysik.*" The principle of Calker, as above stated—that, namely, which merges all the different processes of our intellectual life, whether knowledge, faith, or love, into the science of consciousness—is virtually a return to the subjective idealism of Fichte. The reader will also be reminded here of some of the main features of M. de Lamennais' latest philosophy.

† In this representation of the Jacobi-Kantists, I have chiefly followed Michelet. The view he takes of them is, however, fully confirmed by all the principal historians of the modern philosophy of Germany.

2. The writers who have grafted the faith-principle upon the philosophy of Fichte, are Schlegel, Schleiermacher, and Novalis. Charles William Frederick Schlegel was born at Hanover in 1772. In 1796 he commenced private lecturing at Dresden. After a time he went to Berlin, and lectured there with great approbation and success. From thence he removed to Paris, where he studied chiefly the oriental languages. On his return to Germany, he joined the Romish Church, and settled at Vienna as court secretary. After experiencing some other changes, external and mental, he died on a temporary visit to Dresden, January 11, 1829.

To estimate the literary life of Schlegel aright, we must regard it in its progressive development. His earlier years, it is well known, were given to classical literature and criticism; and ever after, indeed, he retained the faculty of presenting ideas in a popular and descriptive form, to a much higher degree than that of constructing a connected and logical system. Hence, while the writings of Schlegel are far better known out of Germany than most other philosophical works of the present century, they present much greater difficulty when we attempt to condense them briefly into an organic whole.

He tried his pen, first of all, in the department of philosophy, by writing sketches and reviews for some of the higher periodicals of the day. These were afterwards collected, in conjunction with those of his brother Augustus William, and published under the title of "*Characteristiken und Kritiken*." The earliest work in which Schlegel published his philosophical views, independently, to the world, was a romance entitled "*Lucinde*." Here he sought to employ the subjective philosophy of Fichte, in order to explain the nature and the mysteries of human life. In the years 1804-5-6, he delivered courses of lectures, in which he aimed at explaining logically the views he had presented before only in their poetical form, but in which it is easy to detect a gradual swerving from his original subjective stand-point, towards the mysticism of his later life.\*

A period of twenty years now intervenes before our author again appears before the public in the garb of a philosopher; but in the meantime, his whole intellectual life had undergone almost an entire alteration. He had gone from the literary activity of Saxony to the mental stagnation of Vienna, from the religious

\* These lectures were published posthumously in his remains by Windishmann. (1836).

freedom of Protestantism, to the absolute submission of the Catholic. In a word, the subjective principles of his former works had produced their recoil, and driven him into an utterly objective mysticism. In 1827, he began again to lecture on philosophy, at Vienna, and to develop his altered views in a popular and discursive form. These lectures comprehend "The Philosophy of Life," "The Philosophy of History," and "The Philosophy of Language." It was whilst engaged indeed in completing his last course, then delivering at Dresden, that his career was arrested by the hand of death. We must proceed accordingly to give an exposition of Schlegel's philosophy, as it appears before us during the different eras we have just described.

In order to comprehend the philosophy contained in the "*Lucinde*,"\* it is necessary to cast a glance upon the "*Wissenschaftslehre*" of Fichte. Fichte made the *me*, the absolute generating principle of all things. There are, however, two sides to this position, the theoretical and the practical. In his theoretical philosophy, Fichte represented the *me* as fettered and determined by certain inexplicable laws, which took the place of the not-me—the objective world; and to which the endless activity of the *me* was subjected. On the other hand, these laws, these objective bounds, were explained by the practical philosophy, as themselves the product of the absolute activity of the *me*, created in order to bring that activity to some distinct end, and aid it in the accomplishment of its own destiny. Hence two views of human life could arise. Either on the theoretical principle the *me* yields itself to the power of what appear then to be objective laws and realities, or, assuming its *practical* independence, it holds itself free from such trammels, and lives simply and solely for itself. This latter, according to Schlegel, is the spirit of the *romantic* in human life in its loftier meaning, and forms the view of life itself which is pictured in "*Lucinde*."

To get a deeper insight into this remarkable aspect in which human life was portrayed by our author, it must be further observed, that the theoretical and practical stand-points are in themselves paradoxical. The one supposes that the mind is controlled, the other that it is free; the one subjects it to objective laws, the other elevates it above them, so that they appear to be made only by and for itself. How, then, is this contradiction to be solved?

\* *Lucinde*, whom he pictures in this romance, was his future wife, a daughter of Mendelssohn, the philosopher, and the German translator of Mad. de Staël's "*Germany*."



By bringing in, says Schlegel, the idea of *Irony*. The me is absolutely free; but it loves paradox, and chooses of itself to submit to the objective. At the same time it knows that this submission is in itself *unreal*, that it is only true *ironically*; and that, while it plays off the paradox of submission, it may still feel itself independent. Such is the philosophy of the higher romantic in human life. There the mind, though involved in all the habits and regulations of *outward* life, yet lives for itself, clothes the objective in the garb of its own individuality, throws the light of the inward world over the most common scenes and events of the outward; and lives thus itself, a paradox and a perpetual irony upon human existence.

This state of mind expresses itself by a tender and hallowed feeling, a longing which, independently of its object, is itself bliss. This longing cannot be realized in *action*. What avails action, when the whole circumference of being, and even of possibility, is already included in the very nature of the me? To act, is to suppose that something more can be produced, some higher and happier condition, than that already attained. As all being and all possibility is already in *the me*, the only high and blissful life is to give ourselves up to divine idleness; to allow our being spontaneously to *vegetate*; and the nearer the life of the man approaches to that of the *plant*, the more pure and perfect it is. Here, at length, in this spontaneous vegetation of our being, in this hallowed idleness, we find eternal sunshine and youth; instead of grasping eagerly after some distant object, some unrealized bliss, we find in our very longing itself, the goal and the prize at which it aims. *Only in the seeking itself, does the spirit discover the mystery after which it seeks.* Here, then, we see the subjective principle absolutely complete. The me, at length becomes the cause, impulse, boundary, and goal of its own action. Such is the ironical-standpoint in Schlegel's philosophy; such the nature of the truly romantic in human life.\*

We must now pass to our author's lectures, as delivered in the years 1804-1806. Here we find him attempting to bring his principles, hitherto presented in a very discursive form, into some degree of philosophical order; and at the same time struggling against the extreme results to which they seemed infallibly to lead. The first volume contains an introduction, a logic, and a rapid

\* On the scientific principle of "Lucinde," see Schaller's "Vorlesungen über Schleiermacher," Lec. 1. (Halle, 1844.)



survey of the history of philosophy. The second volume includes his lectures on psychology, on nature, on man, on the Deity, and, to some extent, on morals.

In the introduction he explains the *idea* of philosophy, as being that of a fundamental science, which gives life and soul to all the rest, and affords the only absolute basis on which they can rest.\* To determine the method of philosophy, is the province of logic. Logic, in its lower acceptation, is the "science of the rules of thinking," and, accordingly, has to do simply with the forms of thought. In this respect, of course, it can have nothing to do with objective truth; and to use the syllogistic organum for this purpose, is to involve ourselves in a mere empty dogmatism. There is, however, a higher logic, which has to do with the *real objects* of philosophy; which points us at once to their inward essence, and shows us their progressive development. The former is termed the syllogistic, the latter the genetic method.

The genetic or speculative method gives us the real and essential development of the idea we form of existence itself; it affords us a philosophical *construction* of the universe. This method has three movements, which must concur in the evolution of an idea: the first is abstraction, by which we grasp the pure essential idea itself; the second is *construction*, by which we exhibit its varied properties in their order and connection; and the third is *reflection*, in which we recombine the parts into a whole. In this part of Schlegel's logic, we are strongly reminded of the dialectic method of Hegel; and it has even been reproached to the latter by some of his opponents, that he has borrowed the essential ideas of his own world-renowned system from these early deliverances of Schlegel. Whichever may have been first in the field, certain it is, that the lectures before us contain a logical constructive method which proposes to show the rhythm of all being, and that this method contains the triple movement, consisting of the union of two opposites in a higher indifference.† This method is, indeed, to a great extent, *developed* by the deduction of the chief categories of existence, and the construction of the full conception of God.

As another preparation for his metaphysical system, Schlegel next gives a sketch of the history of philosophy, following the great schools of idealism, empiricism, scepticism, and mysticism, through their various changes, and estimating their various merits. The

\* "Vorlesungen über Schleiermacher," vol. i. p. 13, &c.

† "Vorlesungen über Schleiermacher," vol. i. p. 159, *et seq.*

result is, that each of these systems is seen to contain some element of truth; but that, after all has been done, the only source from which a clear and steady light can be thrown on our researches, the only spirit which can unite all the results of our science into a harmonious whole, the only guide which can lead us through the labyrinth of human opinions into the broad daylight of truth, is that *faith*, which, dimly seen in the Platonic, has been fully developed in the Christian philosophy. Here, then, we see the mysticism of Schlegel breaking through the clouds of his original subjective idealism. In fact, he had carried his subjective principle to such a pitch, that at length he took refuge in an objective and historical revelation, against the bottomless abyss of his own scientific conclusions.\*

This leads us to Schlegel's later philosophical system. Hitherto he had been only groping out of his subjective trammels; now, however, having reached the religious point of view—the only one, as he thinks, from which truth can be seen with distinct and steady eye—he begins to build up his edifice. Seen from the religious point of view; the real object of philosophy is to restore to mankind that Divine image which it has lost. Men, for the most part, are buried in objective pursuits, and gratifications of sense; they do not see the purport of their existence; they do not comprehend the true end of human life; they do not gaze steadfastly at their high destiny. To bring these things home to our inner consciousness, to restore truth to the mind, and inspire it to labor for high purposes—this is the noble aim of all true philosophy. Schlegel, then, divides his system into three parts:—1. Philosophy of Life; 2. Philosophy of History; 3. Philosophy of Thought, both subjectively and objectively considered. In the first, he shows the primary state of the human consciousness in its rise above the grossness of common life, and its first aspirations after truth. In the second, he traces the development of this higher life through the various ages of history; in the last, he intended to picture the state of man in his final restoration to the Divine likeness.

1. The philosophy of life comprehends, first, psychology, and then theology both in itself and in its applications. In his psychology, Schlegel regards our whole compound humanity as consisting of mind, soul, and body. The mind possesses the two faculties of will and understanding; the soul possesses other two, termed reason and imagination. Imagination invents; reason

\* See Michelet, vol. ii. p. 4; also Schaller's "Vorlesungen," pp. 29-31.

regulates ; understanding perceives ; and will impels to moral action.\*

Man, at his creation, not only had these faculties in their highest perfection, but they all worked harmoniously together, so as to bring out the most glorious moral and intellectual results. But since the entrance of sin into the world, they have been thrown into fearful disorder ; so that, by the operation of one faculty clashing with another, the purport of the whole has been frustrated and destroyed. The object alike of religion and philosophy, is to restore the harmony which has been thus broken.†

With regard to the ground-principles of natural theology, Schlegel rests the knowledge of God upon a fourfold revelation which is made to us in Scripture, in nature, in conscience, and in history. In treating of the first of these proofs, that of Scripture and tradition generally, Schlegel employs a course of reasoning precisely similar to that of the French theological school. With regard to the light of conscience, he reminds us strongly of Kant and Jacobi.

The principal object he has in view, however, in entering the region of theology, is to show its vast importance in the philosophical exposition of the other branches of human knowledge. Once let us light up the torch of a pure theology, and we see everything around us as parts of a great plan. From this point of view, for example, we gain a deeper insight into the philosophy of *nature*, which is still going on to its perfection, and awaiting the new heavens and the new earth. From this again springs the true philosophy of government. God is the ruler of mankind, the sole origin of all power ; and the three relationships in which the power of God is represented on earth, are those of the father, the priest, and the sovereign. The authority which each of these possesses, according to Schlegel, is Divine. In brief, the author here discusses every philosophical question from a purely religious standpoint. Man, nature, history, human life, everything is viewed in its relation with God ; and from Divine revelation alone are we to find the key to their interpretation.

2. If the object of the philosophy of life is to describe the first awakening of conscience to a higher existence, the philosophy of *History* shows the process by which this great end has hitherto been unfolding itself in the world. The loss of the Divine image

\* Schlegel enumerates also four subordinate faculties ; the senses, the passions, the memory, and conscience. These are the connecting links between the four principal.

† " *Phil. des Lebens*," p. 140, *et seq.*



consisted in the separation of the elements of the human consciousness; its restoration will consist in the complete reunion of them. In the first period of the world, the Chinese represented the pure reason; the Indians, the imagination; the Egyptians, the understanding; and the Jews, the will—each in its false and fatal isolation. The second period of the world's history began with the Persians, and included the Greek and Roman world. In this age, we see the uniting process in its commencement—we see humanity stepping forth into a more commanding position, and becoming more blended in political relations, and in mental communion, through the world. The third age is the Christian. Here we find the true uniting principle, which, though striven against by self-love, by natural vanity, and by the false spirit of independence, shall at length unite all mankind into one vast brotherhood; shall bring back all the scattered elements of man's consciousness into one focus, and make humanity itself Divine.\* In all this, Schlegel's catholicism burns forth most conspicuously. To him everything that favors *freedom*, political or mental, is antichrist; and peace is to be found only in submission to authority, both in church and state.

3. Having taken an historical review of man's spiritual life up to the present day, Schlegel proceeds to describe the final completion and reunion of man's consciousness in the world, which he proposed to explain at length in the philosophies of *language*, of *religion*, and of *nature*.† In all these, the mystical element is most prominently shown forth. *Language*, he considers, is the outward transcript of those eternal ideas and feelings, which have flowed from the mind of God into that of man. *Religion* expresses the innermost point of the human consciousness—that in which reflection and feeling unite, and in which God is realized as the very corner-stone of our inward life. Lastly, *nature* is to be viewed by the philosopher as the perpetual manifestation of the Divine love in a material form. In these lectures, delivered at Dresden, we see a somewhat higher philosophical element than in those which he composed for the lecture-room of Vienna. In the "Philosophie des Lebens," indeed, he departed almost entirely from the very idea of *science*, and took his stand upon a purely objective revela-

\* "Phil. der Geschichte," lecs. 5, 7, and 18.

† These topics were treated of in a course of lectures which he commenced in Dresden. Nine of them were delivered, and it was whilst preparing the others, that he was suddenly called from his labors. The last words he wrote on M.S. were these:—"Das ganz vallendete und vollkommene Verstehen selbst aber—"



tion, coming to us through tradition and the Bible. In the Dresden lectures, the spirit of mysticism is equally apparent; but it appears in a more subjective form, and approaches nearer to the faith-philosophy of Jacobi. The result to which they virtually arrive, may be briefly stated as follows:—That true knowledge consists, not in viewing things as they externally appear, but as they are essentially in themselves; and that the only way by which we can attain to such a perception of them is, by seeing how they have all flowed forth from God, and how they eternally subsist in Him. The method by which this result is prosecuted, is a mixture of religious faith, historical research, and speculative reasoning; a method which seems to combine, in strange association, the reflection of Fichte and the faith-philosophy of Jacobi, with the submissive religious belief of the Catholic.\*

Pass we now from Schlegel to his friend Frederick Daniel Ernest Schleiermacher. This extraordinary thinker and writer was born at Breslau, A. D. 1768, of parents who belonged to the society of Moravian Brethren. His earliest years were spent in the midst of the religious life, for which that brotherhood was remarkable; and never did he lose the impressions which were made upon him at that period. He studied theology at the University of Halle; and, in 1794, was ordained to a pastorate, first in Landsberg, and then at Berlin. In the year 1802, he became professor of theology and university preacher at Halle; and, in 1806, removed again to Berlin, where he resided, sustaining the various offices of preacher, professor, and royal minister of instruction, until his death, which took place on the 12th of Feb. 1834.

Schleiermacher was, *par excellence*, a theologian. Religion had been the friend and companion of his childhood; and he never deserted his first love. The instruction of religion formed the great purpose of his life; the reformation and spread of religion was the object of his most earnest endeavors; and his last words, after receiving the holy communion, were, "In *this* faith I die." Had we to portray the influence which Schleiermacher exerted upon the theology of his age, we should fill many pages, ere we could do justice to his long and laborious life. We should have, for example, to describe the startling effect of his discourses on religion, ("Reden über die Religion,") where he attacked infidelity in its last resource, namely, that of indifference; to recall the solemn accents with which his "Monologues" fell upon the ear of his

\* Michelet, vol. ii. pp. 5—46.

countrymen ; to picture the mighty power of his eloquence, as felt by those who listened to his Sabbath-day labors, or perused them after they were immortalized by his pen : most of all, should we have to trace the entrance of his great production on the " Doctrine of Faith," (Glaubenslehre,) into the abodes of the learned, and the halls of theology and science, to see it wrestling there with the cold-hearted rationalism of the age, or recalling the common soul of humanity back to its better nature and its final rest. These things, however, we must waive, and only take a brief view of Schleiermacher, as a *speculative philosopher*.

One of his earliest efforts in philosophy was his undertaking, in conjunction with Schlegel, to execute a complete translation of Plato.\* The influence that flowed from his love for that sublime thinker, was visible, more or less, through his whole life ; so that, while the right understanding of Platonism owes much to his efforts in its elucidation, he undoubtedly owed much that was lofty and spiritual in his metaphysical views to it. To deduce a complete and connected system of philosophy from the miscellaneous writings of Schleiermacher would be impossible ; in fact, it was a part of his very doctrine, that no philosophical system should be propounded for universal reception, and that no school should be formed. Whilst, therefore, he lectured much upon philosophy, and took many original views upon most questions which it brings before us, he has left no followers behind him, to associate his name with any peculiar class of metaphysical opinions. The writings of Schleiermacher may be divided into three classes. 1. Those which are presented in the oratorical, or, at least, the more poetical form. To these belong the "Reden über die Religion," the "Monologen," and the "Weihnachtsfeier." 2. Those which bear the stamp of a purely philosophical character ; amongst which we reckon chiefly the lectures on "Dialektik," published as part of his remains, (1839,) and his "Sketch of a System of Morals." 3. Those which bear more immediately upon theology. The principal of these (excepting of course his discourses, and tracts of merely local interest) are the work entitled "Christlicher Glaube," and his "Kurze Darstellung des Theologischen Studiums." We must attempt, therefore, to take a rapid glance at these writings, so far, at least, as they carry with them a philosophical interest.

With respect to the "Reden," a cursory view shows us that the

\* At this time, too, Schleiermacher entered enthusiastically into the views expressed by Schlegel, in his "Lucinde." The result was the publication of a little work, entitled "Vertraute Briefe über die Lucinde."

chief philosophical interest of the whole is concentrated in the *second*. It is here that the author proposes to search into the *essence* of religion; to strip it of all collateral phenomena; and to hold up the *man himself*, in his real relation to the Divine. With great and impressive eloquence, he negatives the idea, that religion can be a mere *science*; and equally so the supposition, that it can be a form of *action*. Religion must be something which has a sphere of its own, in connection with the human mind, and into the nature of this sphere we must endeavor to penetrate. According to Schleiermacher, then, religion is a deep emotion of the mind, arising from the absorption of the man—the individual man—in the infinite. “The universe,” he remarks, “is in one uninterrupted activity, and manifests itself to us every moment. Every form which it brings forth; every being to whom, according to the fulness of life, it gives a separate existence; every event which it shakes out of its rich and ever-fruitful bosom, is a working of the same upon us; and to grasp every single thing, not for itself, but as a part of the whole; to view everything limited, not in its opposition to anything else, but as a manifestation of the infinite in our life; and to give ourselves up to the emotion thus occasioned,—this is religion.”\* Again, he says,—“The one and all in religion, is to perceive everything which moves us in feeling, in its highest unity, as one and the same; and everything particular and singular as only existing through *this*; consequently, to regard our life and being as a life and being in God.”† Throughout the whole oration, the author labors to make it clear and convincing, that religion is the feeling of the infinite—the particular seen to be a part of the universal; in brief, that it is to view God in all things, and all things in God.

So far Schleiermacher would seem to be throwing himself into a kind of theological objective idealism; in fact, as an evidence of this, he passes a splendid panegyric upon Spinoza as a man “full of religion, and full of the Holy Ghost.”‡ In the Monologues, however, we see the influence of Fichte reappearing; here in due time we have the subjective phase of the religious life fully expounded, and placed by the side of those former and more objective speculations. As in the Orations, so in the Monologues, the second topic of discussion is that which excites the deepest interest—it is that, namely, in which Schleiermacher develops his peculiar doctrine of individuality (*Princip der Eigenthümlichkeit*). Fichte,

\* Reden, p. 58, (Berlin, 1843).

† Ibid. p. 59.

‡ Ibid. p. 43.



as we have seen, made the-me *absolute*; the very essence of *man* to him consisted in our self-consciousness; no higher absolute principle was admitted as at all conceivable. Schleiermacher, on the contrary, started with a conception of the absolute as complete as that of Spinoza; but now comes back to the affirmation of the-me, as itself comprehending and involving the absolute. This blending of the objective and subjective stand-point might at first seem altogether contradictory, but this is far from being the case. We may abstract from *self* all mere finite individuality; we may attain the notion of *pure personality* as existing in every man: and then what results? Clearly this, that every man is a peculiar manifestation of the absolute, a representation in himself of the whole universe. The human consciousness is a microcosm—each one a distinct microcosm. In a word, the Deity unfolds and manifests Himself through the individualities of the different minds which He has created. Here, therefore, the objective philosophy of the Orations, and the subjective philosophy of the Monologues unite. In the former we see man elevated by religion to oneness with the absolute; in the latter, we see him manifesting the absolute through the very medium of his own peculiar individuality.

But the question now comes, how are we to realize our oneness with the absolute; how can we rise to this high and holy religious consciousness? This is the point illustrated in the Weihnachtsfeier; in which *Christ* is represented as the perfect union of the human consciousness with the Divine; and man, exhorted by a living union with him, to realize his own union with God. "As Schleiermacher," observes Michelet, "could not but perceive that the peculiar (*das Eigenthümliche*), as such, must be a very inadequate expression of the universal, while still the peculiar was the very principle of his philosophy, he holds up a privileged personality, that of Christ, as the highest expression of the absolute. This is the only unity, in which the many can know themselves as one. Accordingly he lays down, in the life of the individual, two sources of joy which should be celebrated. Our birthday is the type of a *definite* and *limited* feeling. The Christmas festival is the *universal* feeling, in which we celebrate human nature, as it is seen flowing from the Divine principle. The earth-spirit, namely, humanity itself, is perfect and without growth; but the individual man is subjected both to imperfection and to progress, until he becomes one with humanity at large. Only when the individual regards humanity as a living assembly of individuals, only when he bears in himself



its spirit and its consciousness, when he loses himself in its separate existence, and anon finds himself again,—only then has he in himself the higher life, and the peace of God. This communion, the self-consciousness of mankind in the individual, is the Church. We seek a point, then, from which such communion has sprung, and because in Christ this self-consciousness of the earth-spirit first awoke, therefore he is the Word of God become flesh. In the God-man, therefore, all are one, for every one must manifest this identity. In the birth of Christ every one sees his own higher birth, and therefore universal joy is the character of the Christmas festival.”\*

Here, then, we see the *first* series of Schleiermacher’s speculations completed. In the Orations we have religion contemplated as a *feeling*, the feeling of the infinite; in the Monologues we have it regarded as moral *energy*; and in the Christmas festival, we have it brought into the form of a distinct *idea*, the union of the finite and infinite personality through oneness with Christ.

We must now pass to the consideration of Schleiermacher’s philosophy, as it appears in its more direct and formal character. Every kind of knowledge which is not based upon philosophy, he regards as either traditionary, or in some way incomplete. Real knowledge can only arise from a perception of the unity and completeness of all science, as springing from fixed fundamental principles. The basis of all philosophy, therefore, and consequently of all truth, must be found in the essential identity of the knowing and the known, of thought and existence. This unity, it is evident, cannot be realized as an *idea* or conception; for then it would already be within the region of *the ideal*, neither can it be realized, as Fichte would have it, in the *will*. The blending of thought and volition, however, produces a phenomenon termed *feeling*, and it is *here* that all opposition between subject and object vanishes, here we obtain a direct intuition of the absolute (Jacobi).

All philosophy, then, *supposes* the absolute in itself, and likewise assumes the opposition of subject and object, of the intellectual and the natural, as fundamental determinations of it. This gives rise to two main and all-embracing sciences; the science of *nature* and the science of *reason*. To look still further into the details of philosophy, we must take into consideration, that there are two modes in which all science may be viewed; namely, as empirical or observing on the one hand, as speculative or intuitional on the other. All *real* knowledge is both empirical and speculative; the

\* “Entwickelungs-geschichte,” p. 97.

difference between its various departments, consisting only in the relative preponderance of the one form of knowing over the other. Accordingly, taking the sciences of nature and reason as fundamental, we may regard each of them in two different lights; that is, as having a preponderance on the one hand of the empirical, on the other of the speculative. *Nature*, viewed with a maximum of the empirical, is Natural History (Naturkunde); with a maximum of the speculative, it is Physics (Naturwissenschaft). On the other side, reason, viewed with a preponderance of the empirical, gives the Philosophy of History (Geschichtskunde); with a preponderance of the speculative it gives *Ethics*. The science of nature is only real and philosophical in as far as it is penetrated with *reason*; that of reason, only so far as it is viewed in connection with *nature*. The empirical and the speculative must mutually penetrate each other, in order to produce real and valid knowledge. If the empirical be viewed alone, then we have merely the bare observation of phenomena, but no *science*; if the speculative be viewed alone, then we have formal logic or dialektik, which has no element of *realism* to support it.\*

In his dialektik, Schleiermacher develops the *forms* of our knowledge with great logical skill, showing (something on the plan of Fichte) how all can be deduced from the fundamental opposition of subject and object, as that in which they are all virtually included. The union of these leads to a higher sphere of mental activity, that of the religious feeling—the intuition of the absolute. By far the most important part of our author's philosophy, however, is contained in the ethics, which have gained in his hands a depth and a significancy never before attained to. Ethics, according to Schleiermacher, is the science which treats of the unity of *nature* and *reason*. Now ethical philosophy, as we showed above, is a branch of science in which the *speculative* predominates, and consequently, like all speculative science, must take its stand upon the universal, and deduce from thence the particular. Ethics accordingly, scientifically considered, is the expression of a *perpetual operating* of reason upon nature. Should it lead us to deduce their absolute unity, so that nature becomes all reason, or reason all nature, the science would be complete, and no further philosophy on the subject required; the continued attempt, however, to unfold their connection and unity, is precisely the process in which ethical science, as we now grasp it, consists.

\* "Entwurf eines Systems der Sittenlehre." See the "Introductory Explanations."

Reason, in its operation upon nature, assumes two great characteristics. First of all, it shows itself as the principle of *form*, or organization. But, secondly, inasmuch as every form in nature is significant of some *idea*, reason shows itself, also, in connection with nature as a *symbolizing* power or activity. These characteristics, which are seen in the material world, impress themselves, also, upon all the features of human society. Whenever nature and reason blend in harmony, there is what we term *good*. According as reason and nature stand affected to each other, different kinds of good come to view. Sometimes the organizing power is predominant, and sometimes the symbolizing—sometimes the idea of unity is in the foreground, and sometimes that of individuality. On these principles, Schleiermacher explains the moral constitution of the family, the state, the principle of association, the priesthood of science, and the ethical nature of the Church.

After these hints as to the position which the ethics hold in our author's philosophy, we must be content to refer our readers to the works themselves for a fuller elucidation.\*

Schleiermacher's most voluminous writings are those which relate to theology. His "Dogmatik" is built upon the reality of religion as developing itself in feeling. Starting from this point, he has produced a system of theology which has had more influence upon the theological thinking in the present age, than, perhaps, any other production of our whole European literature. The subjective idealism of Fichte, and the faith-philosophy of Jacobi, are here seen to pour out all their treasures as humble contributions to the full expansion of the Christian doctrine. We would earnestly recommend the reader who wishes to understand somewhat of the best, the most spiritual, the most religious of the German theological literature, to peruse these noble writings of Schleiermacher; where, amidst much that he may perchance reject, he will find no few materials of instruction and delight.\*

There is yet another name which we must not altogether omit, that, namely, of Novalis. Friedrich Baron von Hardenberg (such was his proper appellation) was born, like Schleiermacher, of Moravian parents, in the duchy of Mansfield, A. D. 1772. In 1790 he entered the university of Jena, and completed his studies in Leip-

\* The chief ethical works of Schleiermacher are, "Grundlinien einer Kritik der bisherigen Sittenlehre, (1803;)" "Ueber die Wissenschaftliche Behandlung des Tugendbegriffs, (1819;)" Ditto "Des Pflichtbegriffs, (1824;)" "Ueber den Begriff des höchsten Gutes, (1827 and 1830;)" and the "Entwurf der Sittenlehre," as before mentioned.

† As a good introduction to Schleiermacher, see Schaller's "Vorlesungen."



sig and Wittenberg. In 1795 he settled at Weissenfels in Thuringia, where, about the same year, he married. Death, however, soon removed his bride from his then happy home, whom, after lingering three melancholy years, he followed into that eternity, with thoughts of which his writings were so deeply imbued. Novalis completes the cycle of mysticism, which we have seen springing from the mixed influence of Fichte and Jacobi. Schlegel, in whom it commenced, took refuge, as we saw, from the abyss of scepticism, to which his extreme subjective principles led, in an objective revelation, as the organ of eternal verities otherwise unknown. Schleiermacher, while making each human consciousness the supreme arbiter and test of truth, yet would assimilate them all to the perfect mind of Christ, the Divine Man, the type of infinite purity and love. Novalis, proceeding one step further, regards it as the true purport of philosophy to destroy the individual, the finite, the imperfect, the subjective self; and to enable us to become one with the infinite and all-perfect mind. To him the foundation of all philosophy is faith, that is, an inward light, which reveals to us the infinite and the real; a direct perception of the Divinity; an irresistible conviction of the presence of the great spirit of the universe in all we see, hear, and feel around us. Thinking is to him but the reflection or *the dream* of faith, one which pictures to us truth only in dim, unreal, and fantastic forms. It is only when we cause our own individuality to sink and die within us, when the peculiar thoughts and feelings of the finite self are crushed under the power of the higher feelings, and we become absorbed in the Divine, that we rise to the full light of truth, and gaze upon things as they are. In Novalis, accordingly, we no longer see the idealist taking his stand upon the principles of a purely subjective philosophy; but we see him, having left the road, and introduced the additional element of a higher faith, completely overcoming the subjective point of view, sinking the individual self in the great spirit of the universe, and evincing a sublime mysticism, that strives to unite man with God.

Novalis only published during his lifetime a few poetical rhapsodies (Hymns on the Night), and other light productions; the chief of his philosophical notions are derived from his posthumous fragments, in which he touches upon many points in morals, physics, and philosophy; and develops somewhat at large the ideas to which we have just adverted.\* The merits of Novalis, as an æsthetic

\* "Novalis Schriften;" "Herausgegeben von Tieck und Schlegel." (1814 and 1837.) These consist of two small vols. 12mo, containing the poems and other frag-



writer, have been discussed in several of our English reviews. The reader can judge of his general style of composition by a reference to these articles: our object has been simply to show his proper position in the development of the subjective mysticism of Germany, as it arose during the earlier years of the present century.

Let us sum up our remarks in a few words. The tendency of Kant's philosophy flowed decidedly towards the point of view we have indicated by the term *subjective idealism*; that, namely, which makes all human knowledge spring from and concentrate in self. This subjective principle was completed in Fichte. In Schlegel we see the subjective philosophy just about to open into the region of scepticism, we might even say of nihilism, and the fatal consequences only retrieved by the interposition of faith. This, accordingly, is to be viewed as the critical turning-point between the subjective and objective tendency in the German philosophy. In Schleiermacher we see the subjective principle not repudiated as by Schlegel, but beginning to assume a more objective character, inasmuch as the human individuality, according to him, is to be moulded into the likeness of Christ, until all men, in their religious consciousness, reflect his Divine image. In Novalis, at length, the subjective self is to be crushed and destroyed, and we are to become one with God, the soul of the world.\*

Here subjective mysticism terminates, and we find a transition from the predominant influence of Fichte to that of Schelling. Schelling saw the abyss of nihilism, in which subjective idealism, when consecutively developed, must end; and began by asserting the claims of some objective reality, upon our firm belief. We have already shown in what manner he developed his whole system of objective idealism, and how nearly he had come in his later views upon the verge of philosophical mysticism. The majority of his followers, indeed, have become decided mystics; and we must now, accordingly, advert to the views which have arisen from the conjunction of the opinions of Schelling with those of Jacobi. Schelling's most popular and striking productions, are unquestionably those in which he develops his principles of "*Natur-Philoso-*

ments. The first vol. consists of a little romance, entitled "Heinrich von Ofterdingen." The second comprehends the "Hymnen an die Nacht," the "Lehrlinge zu Sais," and some philosophical fragments. Of these, the first is on "Philosophy and Physics," in which the idea of nature is particularly developed. The second is on "Æsthetics and Literature."

\* See Michelet "Geschichte," vol. ii. pp. 4, and 114. See also his "Entwicklungsgeschichte," lec. 5.

*phie.*" The school of Schelling, accordingly, has ever been characterized by its tendency to institute speculations of this kind; which, when united with the faith-philosophy, have given rise to theosophic systems, some of a more sober, and others of a more extravagant character. This leads us, then, to consider,

3. Those writers who have combined objective idealism with the philosophy of feeling. One of the most celebrated, and, at the same time, most valuable of these authors, is Gotthilf Heinrich Schubert, now professor at Munich. Incited by his objective tendency, and by his evident admiration of Schelling, Schubert directed his attention, for the most part, to the philosophy of nature, and proposed mystical interpretations of many natural phenomena. In fact, his system, as a whole, starts from nature, and proceeds upwards to spirit; and, accordingly, most of his first writings refer entirely to the world of outward phenomena. The following titles of some of these works will give an idea of the primary branches of Schubert's philosophy:—"Views from the Night Region of Natural Science" (1808), "The Original World and the Fixed Stars" (1822), "Universal History of Nature" (1826, last and complete edition, 1837), &c.

To recount the theories which are here proposed, in their bare principles, would be by no means interesting; and as we have somewhat fully explained the Natur-philosophie of Schelling in a former chapter, our readers can gain from thence an idea of the method in which the same subjects are treated by the author now before us. Suffice it to remark, that, beginning with the fixed stars and the *bare framework* of nature, he attempts to write her complete history through the regions of inorganized masses, plants, and animals, up to the point where the philosophy of nature hands us over to the philosophy of mind. Recommencing his labors, he then sets out upon another journey, and proposes to write the "History of the Soul;" and here it is, that we have peculiarly to look for his metaphysical opinions. In accomplishing this history, he shows, first, how the soul is, as it were, reflected in and by the body; how it gives form and perfection to our material organization. Next entering upon the analysis of mind, he brings forward a somewhat remarkable doctrine, setting forth the distinction between the soul (*Seele*) and the spirit (*Geist*). The soul is the inferior part of our intellectual nature—that which shows itself most distinctly in the phenomena of our dreams—the power of which also is situated in the material constitution of the brain. The

spirit, on the contrary, is that part of our nature which tends to the purely rational, the lofty, the divine. The doctrine of the natural and the spiritual man, which we find in the writings of St. Paul, may perhaps have formed the basis upon which Schubert founded this system of mental dualism. Whatever may have been its origin, however, it forms a very prominent feature in his metaphysical analysis, and affords an explanation of many facts, which is by no means unreasonable or worthless.

The feelings, as might be anticipated, play a very considerable part in Schubert's psychology. Feeling, in reference to the *soul*, is the great impulse of all our outward actions, more especially when, by a ray from heaven, it acquires a moral character, and impels us to what is good and virtuous. Feeling, however, with reference to the *spirit*, is of a far higher character, and appears to us in the form of faith—faith, which conquers sense, and sight, and the power of death—faith, which enables us to realize the Divine, and which gives us at once the longing after, and the full conviction of an immortal life beyond the tomb. Thus, starting from nature in its most original forms, our author pursues his investigations through the whole region of inanimate and animated existence, passes from the world of matter to that of mind, and follows the course of our faculties and feelings, in their gradual rise from the inferior to the superior, until he at length attempts to solve the mysteries of our spiritual being, by the development of that higher faith, which binds us by close affinities to the immortal and the divine. In brief, Schubert may be regarded as one of the best, the most moral, and perhaps we may say, the most religious writers, who have sought to combine the objective philosophy of Schelling with the mystical tendencies of the school of Jacobi.

The next writer of the same school that we have to mention, is Franz Xaver Baader. Unlike Schubert, he begins with the subjective point of view, and from the central region of the soul itself, attempts to spread a new light over the whole realm of being at large. His writings consist, for the most part, of lectures, short treatises, and articles furnished for the philosophical periodicals of the day, in which we find *glimpses* into the different regions of metaphysical truth, rather than a complete and connected system. Of all the philosophers who have taken from Schelling the idea of a dynamical theory of nature, Baader is decidedly the most mystical. There is, indeed, comparatively little in his works to remind one of Jacobi, but a strong affinity for the mystics of earlier



times. It is evident that the author has studied in the school of Jacob Boehme, Paracelsus, and Tauler, and adopted at once their mysticism and their spirituality.

As an opponent of the modern pantheism, Baader stands pre-eminent. He has seized the precise points in which it is most vulnerable, and dealt some of the most sturdy blows against the all-absorbing fatalism to which it inevitably leads. Incapable as are his writings ever to form a distinct school of philosophy, yet there are few men who have scattered around them more fruitful and suggestive ideas; few who have combated more earnestly for the principles which contain the most precious germs of metaphysical, moral, and spiritual truth.

To pursue the windings of the mystical and theosophic systems, which the inordinate speculations of modern times have thrown up to light, would be anything but easy, and anything but instructive; and we should be tempted at once to close our list of authors, chosen from an extraordinary number of names, all candidates for the honor of a philosophical reputation, were not the name of Henry Steffens too prominent, as a mystic natural philosopher, to be passed over in silence. Steffens was born in Sweden in 1773, but since the commencement of the present century, has belonged almost entirely to Germany.\* The fact which places this voluminous author somewhat prominently forward in the philosophical world, is this—that while some of the followers of Schelling have verged more to the subjective, and others to the objective side of his system, Steffens has seized upon the middle point, and labored with much ability to show the absolute unity of nature and spirit. “The totality of the school of Schelling,” remarks Michelet, “is most manifestly set forth in the writings of Steffens. 1. In his ‘Principles of Natural Science philosophically considered’ (1806), he comes near to Oken, and to the formalism of the philosophy of nature. 2. The spiritual side of our knowledge is shown forth in his ‘Caricaturen des Heiligsten’ (1821). 3. In the third series of his writings, the *unity* of nature and spirit is developed, from various points of view. *First*, eternal nature is considered historically, as representing itself in time, and consequently, as a spiritual thing—an idea which Herder had already pointed out, and which Steffens regards as the great theme of his life, the highest aim of all his investigations. To this belongs his ‘Con-

\* Steffens died a year or two ago. His “*Nachgelassene Werke*” were published in 1846, with a preface by Schelling, the last word which that veteran in philosophy has spoken to the public.



tributions to an inward Natural History of the Earth,' and his 'Polemical Treatise towards the furtherance of Speculative Physics.' In the first part of the latter work, he shows how the original union of spirit with nature had been an ancient opinion—that, *e. g.*, of Roger Bacon; how the mechanical view of physics had become entirely predominant in the seventeenth century; and how, in the eighteenth century, men began to rise from the bare material relations to the dynamical opposition of magnetism, of electricity, and of chemistry, *i. e.*, to a dynamical system of physics; until, in our own century, the remarkable union of all the main phenomena of nature, under the idea of one spirit, has introduced the dawn of natural science, *properly so called.* \* \* \* *Secondly*, in his 'Anthropology,' Steffens has exhibited mind or spirit as something reposing upon nature, and remaining in close unity with it, much in the sense of Schubert. *Thirdly*, he proceeds at length to the mystical-religious point of view, after the example of Baader, and reproaches himself with the boldness of his earlier knowledge. To this period belong his writings on 'False Theology and True Faith,—A Voice out of the Churches,' and his treatise, entitled 'How I again became a Lutheran, and what to me Lutheranism is.' ”\*

The three authors above mentioned form but a very small portion of those whom the captivating philosophy of Schelling incited to similar investigations. Of these, the majority became mystics, and even Schelling himself cannot be freed from the charge of decided mysticism, in most of his later productions. The course of the German mysticism, therefore, as a whole, now lies before us. Retracing our steps to Jacobi, we see him introducing into the speculative spirit of the age, the element of faith, as a thing absolutely necessary to the perfection of our knowledge, and the due explanation of the phenomena of the human mind. This faith-element was combined, first, with the current Kantism of the age, and gave rise to the somewhat sober and modified mysticism of Krug, Fries, and Calker; next, finding its way into the subjective idealism of Fichte, it produced the paradoxical mysticism of Schlegel, and the Christian Platonism of Schleiermacher and Novalis;

\* Steffens was a man of vast versatility of genius. In his "Grundzüge der Phil. Naturwissenschaft," he has traversed the sciences of mineralogy, geology, and natural science at large. In his "Anthropology," he has carried the torch of philosophy into the regions of physiology, and the constitution of human nature. In the "Caricaturen des Heiligsten," he discusses the philosophy of politics and society. And lastly, in his religious writings, he has attempted to throw light upon the province of theology, both natural and revealed.

and, lastly, obtaining a lodgment in the objective philosophy of Schelling, it brought to light those multifarious mystical interpretations of natural phenomena, to a few only of which we have now reverted.

The writers I last mentioned, as advocates of modern mysticism in Germany, are the latest representatives of the present age, and in them, therefore, we recognize the exact point to which the mystical tendency has just reached, and with which, accordingly, the present historical inquiry into the German mysticism must terminate. We only add one remark in conclusion. The whole of the intellectual phenomena we have just been reviewing, originated from a new philosophical element, which Jacobi added to the pure logical rationalism of Kant. What is this element? In art, it is called *genius*, in poetry, *inspiration*, in philosophy, *feeling*, in religion, *faith*, in life, *enthusiasm*. Be it what it may by name, there is assuredly a spontaneous movement of the soul, an intuitive apprehension of moral and spiritual truth, developing itself sometimes in meditation, sometimes in action, which gives rise to some of the most striking phenomena of human life. This movement is the basis of mysticism. Mysticism, then, when confined within its proper limits, like all the other philosophical systems, is truth; it is only when this spontaneous element in the soul is elevated over the calm reflection of the understanding and the reason, that it is likely to lead into extravagance and folly.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ON THE ECLECTIC SCHOOL OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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#### SECT. I.—*Rise and Progress of Modern Eclecticism in France.*

THE school of philosophy which forms the subject of the present section might have been treated of as one branch of modern idealism, and would not have found an inappropriate place at the end of our fifth chapter. As, however, eclecticism is not *necessarily* idealistic in its tendency, we have thought it, upon the whole, more convenient to devote a separate portion of our work to the development of its rise and progress, more especially in France.

The current philosophy in France, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, was that which we have already portrayed under the title of *ideology*. So firmly fixed, indeed, was this system in the schools of instruction, and in the very habits of the thinking part of the population, that it seems necessary in the outset to offer some conjectures on the probable causes of its rapid decline. These causes we shall be able to trace by observing the various movements, by which the reaction against sensationalism was gradually developed.

The first indications of discontent towards the reigning system made their appearance amongst some of the more spiritual of the theological writers of the age. Ideology was without a religion—without aught of the Divine and mysterious—without any means of satisfying the irrepressible cravings of the human mind after God and immortality. Even Bonaparte himself is known to have commented with severity upon its utter incapability of showing anything great in human destiny. Considering, then, the force of man's spiritual nature, there is no wonder that there were many prepared, on theological grounds, to combat a philosophy that could lead to so dreary a view of human life.

Again, Ideology, by reducing all the finer sentiments of the mind to mere nervous susceptibility, stripped them of that poetic coloring, which the doctrines of spiritualism so well knew how to throw around them. The poet, the critic, and the man of taste, possess by nature, a kind of spiritual philosophy, which, if not embodied in any distinct doctrines, yet shows itself with equal certainty in the excursions of their fancy, and the refinement of their feelings. Those writers of the age, who, like St. Pierre, Chateaubriand, and Madame de Staël, embodied in their thoughts a tone, either of religious sensationalism or of poetical fervor, must have contrasted very strikingly with the philosophers, who sought to reduce even the most ethereal of our feelings to the mere pulsations of the nervous system. Thus, if there were none ready to contest the dogmas of sensationalism upon scientific grounds, there were many who tacitly refuted them by the philosophy of their feelings and the spiritualism of their sentiments.

Another discouragement was thrown in the path of ideology, by the rapidity with which the power of Bonaparte, during the first decade of the present century, reached its climax. In addition to the ardor for military glory, by which he dazzled the universal mind of his country, and which was anything but favorable to such philosophical pursuits, it is well known that he had a personal antipathy to the so termed ideologues, which he took little care to conceal. Accordingly, in all the schemes for education which issued from his government, the study of this philosophy was thrown altogether in the background, and its cultivation attended rather with the chance of penalty than the expectation of reward.

These several circumstances all tended to foster the doubts which some even of the ideologists themselves began to evince respecting the soundness of their principles. The rage for materialism had, in fact, gone by ; the arguments by which it could be upheld, were exhausted ; the whole extent of its possible influence (an influence not much to be vaunted) was now made visible ; the charm of its novelty was fled. Those who were the professed metaphysicians of the age began to feel that, if any further progress was to be made in their department, it must be by a *change* of system, rather than a closer investigation of their old one ; and that, if the mysteries of the spirit of man were ever to be sounded, other lines must be used than those furnished by sensation alone. Our present object, therefore, will be to trace these indications of reaction from their



first commencement, and show in what manner they have gradually led to the present system of French eclecticism.

In doing this, our first attention must be directed to M. Laromiguière, who was originally reckoned amongst the abettors of ideology, and formed one of the celebrated society who assembled in the retreat of Auteuil. This elegant philosophical writer was born in the year 1756, and having taught metaphysics for some time at Toulouse, removed to Paris towards the commencement of the present century, where he soon became a professor in the normal school. With the exception of a few miscellaneous pieces, his chief reputation as a philosopher rests upon the lectures which he delivered, *ex cathedra*, during the years 1811, 1812, 1813, and which were published in two volumes, with the unassuming title of *Leçons de Philosophie*.\*

M. Laromiguière had been educated a zealous pupil of Condillac; and, although he was led by his own superior genius for mental analysis to depart widely from the opinions of his master, yet he ever seemed to do so with reluctance, and everywhere attempted to make his own opinions coincide as much as possible with the views advanced in the "*Traité des Sensations*." There were, as Cousin expresses it, in M. Laromiguière *two men*, the ancient and the modern; the disciple and the adversary of Condillac; and it is the struggle between these opposed spirits, which forms the great leading peculiarity in all his writings. If, therefore, our author did not make that progress towards a more reflective philosophy, which was soon afterwards made by those who followed in his footsteps, yet at any rate, to him must be awarded the honor of the first great struggle to throw off the chains of the reigning authority.

The philosophy of M. Laromiguière is by no means difficult to expound; his clear, consecutive, and precise habit, both of thinking and writing, affording ample means of doing so with ease and distinctness. In the volumes to which we have just alluded, there are two great subjects which are brought under discussion; the first is, the analysis and classification of the human faculties; the other is, the nature and origin of our ideas: and from each of these portions we can derive a tolerably accurate insight into the spirit of his philosophy. Let us first advert to his classification of the *faculties*. Here, instead of beginning, as Condillac does, with the great fundamental faculty of *sensation*, he substitutes in its

\* Several editions of these Lectures have since appeared. The references are here given to the 4th edition, 3 vols. 12mo, published in Paris in 1826.

place that of *attention*; from which, as the basis, he derives in regular succession, all the other powers and capacities of the human mind.\* These powers and capacities he separates into two great classes—those of the *understanding* and those of the *will*; not regarding, indeed, either the understanding or the will, as designating separate and individual faculties, but using them simply as general terms by which to denote two distinct *assemblages* of mental phenomena. The faculties of the understanding he reduces to these three:—1. Attention; 2. Comparison; 3. Reasoning. Of these three, attention is the fundamental principle from which the other two proceed; and of these two, again, the phenomena usually denoted by the words memory, judgment, imagination, &c., are simply modifications. Thus there are, according to M. Laromiguière, three generic powers of the understanding, from which all the specific or subordinate phenomena proceed. Since, however, these three generic powers in their last analysis are all seen to be included in the first, the whole of the phenomena of the understanding may be said to spring from the one great fundamental faculty of *attention*.†

If we now turn to the will, we find, according to M. Laromiguière, a complete parallel existing between its phenomena and those we have just been considering. The foundation of all voluntary action in man is *desire*; and in the same manner as we have already seen the two latter faculties of the understanding spring from the first, so now we see springing from desire, as the basis, the two corresponding phenomena of *preference* and *liberty*.‡ These three powers, then, being established, all the subordinate powers of the will are without difficulty reducible to them, so that, at length, we have the complete man viewed in two different aspects:—in the one, as an intellectual; in the other, as a voluntary being; the chief facts of his intellectual exactly corresponding to those of his voluntary existence. Lastly, to bring the whole system to a state of complete unity, our author shows that desire itself is, strictly speaking, a peculiar form of attention; that the fundamental principle, therefore, of our intellectual and voluntary life, is the same; that the power of attention, broadly viewed, (being, in fact, but another expression for the natural activity of the human mind,) is the point from which the whole originally proceeds.§

\* For his analysis of Condillac's classification, see Part I. lec. iii. For the statement of his own system, see Part I. lec. iv.

† Leçons, vol. i. p. 104, *et seq.*

‡ Ibid., vol. i. p. 113, *et seq.*

§ “ La liberté naît de la préférence, la préférence, du désir : le désir est la direction des

Now, the contrast between this psychology and that of Condillac is sufficiently striking; the one being indeed, in a measure, directly opposed to the other. The latter system assumes *sensation*, not only as its point of departure, but as the formative principle of every other faculty; the former builds up the whole upon *attention*. The one lays at the foundation of our whole intellectual and active life a faculty purely *passive* in its nature, and regards all phenomena as simply transformations of it; the other assumes a primitive power, the very essence of which is *activity*, and makes all our other powers more or less share in this essence. The one deduces all the facts of consciousness from the impulse of the world without upon the mind within; the other derives them from the reaction of the mind within upon the world without. So widely had the pupil, perhaps almost unconsciously to himself, departed from the philosophy of his master.

The second part of M. Laromiguière's lectures refers to the origin of our ideas. Here, in order to swerve as little as possible in appearance from the philosophy of Condillac, he makes the whole *material* of our knowledge come from our *sensibility*. Condillac had derived all our ideas from sensation in its ordinary and contracted sense; Locke had derived them from sensation and reflection, thus taking in the active as well as the passive element to account for the phenomena of the case; M. Laromiguière, however, explains his meaning of the word *sensibility* in such a manner, as to make the foundation still broader than that of Locke himself. *Sensibility*, he shows, is of four kinds:—1. That produced by the action of external things upon the mind—this is sensation in the ordinary sense of the word; 2. That produced by the action of our faculties upon each other—this is equivalent to Locke's reflection; 3. That which is produced by the recurrence and comparison of several ideas together, giving us the perception of *relations*; and 4. That which is produced by the contemplation of human actions, as right or wrong; which is the moral faculty.\*

In this theory, it appears at once evident that there is a secret revolt from the doctrines of sensationalism. Our author, in explaining his notion of the *sensibility* of the human mind, recedes step by step, until he has virtually undone all that had been at-

facultés d' l'entendement, qui naissent les unes, des autres, le raisonnement de la comparaison, et la comparaison de l'attention. Par conséquent, il est prouvé que la pensée, ou la faculté de penser, qui embrasse toutes les facultés de l'âme, dérive de l'attention, c'est-à-dire du pouvoir que nous avons de concentrer notre activité et notre sensibilité sur un seul objet pour les distribuer ensuite sur plusieurs." Vol. i. p. 125.

\* Pt. II. Leçon iii.



tempted in the analysis of our simpler notions, from Locke down to his own times. From sensation, as the most obvious form of our sensibility, he goes back to reflection ; from reflection he goes back to the power of perceiving relations, *i. e.*, to judgment in its primitive form ; from judgment he comes at last to the moral faculty, viewing it, also, as an original and irreducible fact in our constitution. The very manner, indeed, in which these four classes of phenomena are presented, namely, as different branches of our sensitive life, shows the struggle which was going on in the mind of the author, between the system he had left and the broader and deeper views which were opening before him. This struggle, however, was the harbinger of better days. The activity of the human mind was again vindicated ; the majesty of reason restored ; and, what was still more important, the moral faculty was again raised from its ruins to sway its sceptre over human actions and purposes. M. Laromiguière, the ideologist, will always be viewed as the day-star of French eclecticism.\*

Hitherto there was no *open* revolt manifested against the authority of Condillac in the public expositions of philosophy. France was, as yet, entirely pledged to sensationalism ; and although deeper thoughts were stirring in the minds of those who, like M. Laromiguière, were dissatisfied with the reigning system, yet no direct hostility was shown to the system itself. To show this was reserved for M. Royer-Collard, whom we now accordingly introduce to the notice of our readers. Peter Paul Royer-Collard was born in the year 1763, and began his career as an advocate in the French Parliament. During the Revolution, he was one of those who, while advocating the principles of popular liberty, yet endeavored to restrain the outbreaks of licentiousness by which that age was unhappily characterized. In the year 1810 he was made Dean of the Faculty of Letters, in the Normal School at Paris ; and it was in the lectures which he delivered there, from the year 1811 to 1814, that he laid the foundation for his reputation in philosophy. It is to be lamented, however, that so small a portion of these lectures has been given to the public through the medium of the press. An introductory discourse forms the whole of what was published under his own eye ; and although his papers have been admirably arranged and edited by M. Jouffroy, as an adjunct

\* Those who wish to see a masterly estimate of M. Laromiguière's philosophical character, should read the funeral oration delivered by M. Cousin, and inserted in his "Fragments Philosophiques." Also M. Maine de Biran's Examination of his "Leçons de Philosophie."



to his translation of Dr. Reid's philosophy, yet the real mind and spirit of an author must necessarily suffer much when they are only known through the medium of posthumous fragments. We shall attempt, however, as far as our means will admit, to give the main features of our author's metaphysical system.

M. Royer-Collard, on assuming the chair of metaphysics at Paris, boldly commenced by setting at defiance the whole authority of Condillac, and the ideologists; and though he stood alone, without any kindred mind to aid and sympathize with him in his undertaking, yet he firmly persisted in declaring himself the advocate of a *new* philosophy. The student who has thoroughly mastered the controversy of Reid against the scepticism of his day, will have no difficulty in understanding the position which was held by M. Royer-Collard, as the professed opponent of sensationalism. Well instructed in the philosophy of Scotland, and deeply imbued with its spirit, he saw that he had to direct the same arguments against Condillac, as Reid had directed against Hume. He clearly comprehended that the ideal system, which upheld the scepticism of the one, equally upheld the sensationalism of the other, and that by shaking this foundation he should destroy *every* edifice which could be erected upon it.

To make this more evident, we must remind the reader, that Hume's argument proceeded somewhat in the following manner. First, let it be conceded that all our knowledge of external things is communicated through the medium of *ideas*, and that its veracity depends *solely* upon the inward ideal representation being correct. This point being established, it follows, that we can never attain to any certainty with regard to the existence of the external world; it being perfectly impossible to verify the accuracy of the image by a comparison of it with the original. Once grant, then, that *all* our knowledge consists in *ideas*, and we can never get beyond them; the passage from the ideal to the real can never be discovered, and even if it could be discovered, still the *real* itself must remain to us perfectly unknown. M. Royer-Collard perceived that if we admit this hypothesis at the commencement to be correct, the whole train of reasoning based upon it was irrefragable: and he still further perceived, that the doctrine of Condillac virtually included in it all these consequences. If, as that philosopher maintained, all our knowledge is derived from our sensations, if our whole consciousness, in fact, consists of nothing else, then why should we attribute an objective reality to one sensation more than

another—why should we suppose, for example, that the sensation of magnitude and extension has a real and material object answering to it, while that of a sound or an odor has none?

Following up the reasoning of Dr. Reid, our author showed with great force and perspicuity, that in connection with certain sensations we are led by the very constitution of our minds to supply the further idea of an external object, from which those particular sensations proceed. Reid termed these primitive judgments principles of common sense; Stewart called them primary laws of reason; M. Royer-Collard considered it to be a kind of *intellectual instinct*, by which we pass from the inward sensation to the outward reality. The working of this instinct he explains under the idea of a natural process of induction, which leads us infallibly to conclude from the unceasing variety of sensations which crowd in upon us, not only the real existence of external objects, but also much concerning their nature and properties. So far, then, our author trod in the footsteps of his Scottish instructors, and wielded with admirable success the weapons of which they had first proved the utility.

Next to this controversy, M. Royer-Collard proceeded to the analysis of our fundamental *ideas*. The notions we possess of substance, of cause, of time, of space, of eternity, of infinity, &c., were all brought under review; and, by a most careful investigation, it was shown that they do not bear the character of abstractions, or generalizations, made from experience, but that they are primitive *a priori* notions, with which the mind is furnished as starting points for all its knowledge. After this, he proceeded to explain the notions of right and wrong, of duty and obligation, of all, in a word, which peculiarly distinguishes our moral nature; and tearing to shreds the flimsy reasoning of Helvétius and Volney, he drew forth from the depths of the human consciousness the indestructible element of eternal and immutable morality, which they had alike rejected in theory, and too much despised in practice. "We recall," says one of his biographers, "the effect which his whole address upon this subject, so grave, so powerful, so full of emotion, produced upon the minds of the hearers. He arrested the understandings which he did not gain, or which did not fully comprehend him; he captivated the rest; he elevated, fortified, and filled them with wisdom and with reason; he played the same part as did Socrates with the youth, who listened to his instructions."

From this brief sketch of M. Royer-Collard's labors in the de-

partment of philosophy, it is sufficiently evident, that he had reconsidered and recast the whole method of philosophical research in his own country. No longer content with the attempts which the ideological school had been making to explain the facts of our moral and intellectual nature, by an appeal to external influences, he felt and acknowledged the existence of a world within, the facts of which have to be observed, classified, and reasoned upon, just in the same manner as the facts of the world without. He entered the hidden chamber of the human mind, with the lamp of induction in his hand; and if his life was neither long enough, nor calm enough, to inspect the whole region which he had opened to view, yet, having pointed out the way, he did not want those, among his admiring pupils, who were ready to enter into his labors, and carry them forward towards their completion. Before we proceed, however, to exhibit the effects of his instructions upon the progress of mental science, we must pause to notice a contemporary author, whose extraordinary philosophical genius has left many traces behind it, not only in France, but in various parts of Europe besides.

The author to whom we now allude is M. Maine de Biran, who was born in 1766, and died, too soon for the interests of philosophy, in 1824. Maine de Biran was one of the celebrated society of Auteuil, to which we have before alluded, and from which all the modern philosophy of France has virtually proceeded. In the year 1800, the National Institute offered a prize for the best essay "On the Influence of Habit upon the Faculty of Thinking," which was awarded to M. Maine de Biran, as the successful competitor. In this essay he showed his entire predilection for the principles of ideology, accounting for all the phenomena of the human consciousness by the action and reaction of the nervous system. Soon after this (in 1803) he bore off another prize for an essay "On the Decomposition of the Faculty of Thinking," in which essay he showed the first signs of defection from the philosophy of Condillac, and the first germs of those peculiar sentiments, for which he afterwards became celebrated. In 1807 he bore off fresh honors from the Academy of Sciences of Berlin, for a memoir on the question "Whether there is in man an immediate internal intuition, and in what it differs from the perceptions of the senses." Other honors he gained shortly after from Copenhagen, for an exposition of "The mutual relation of man's moral and physical constitution." In both these last essays he departed still further than ever



from his original views, and gradually brought his new philosophy to maturity. Anxious to impart his doctrines to France, he embodied them in a short work, which he entitled "An Examination of the Lectures of M. Laromiguière;" and finally crowned his philosophical labors by his magnificent article on Leibnitz in the "Universal Biography."\*

The great fact of consciousness which M. Maine de Biran developed with so much perseverance, was that of the *activity* of the human mind—the power of the *will*. This fact had been entirely neglected by the sensational school, which, only intent upon the influence of the outward and material, had altogether banished one at least of our three fundamental notions. It was M. Biran's peculiar merit to recall this notion from oblivion, and to re-establish it with due honor as a great and leading idea in our intellectual existence. Already, in his Essay on the decomposition of thought, he began to depart from his former physiological tendencies, and to assert the distinct reaction of some active immaterial principle upon the intimations of sense.† In the memoirs of Berlin and Copenhagen he placed the activity of the human mind in a still clearer light; and in his next published work—that on Laromiguière—he fully establishes the doctrine, that the soul is a *cause*, a force, an active principle; and that the phenomena of consciousness can never be explained until we clearly apprehend the *voluntary* nature of its thoughts and impulses.

Not content, however, with this, he began next to ask whether there was anything whatever within the bounds of existence, which might not equally be reduced to the notion of a *power* or force; whether the idea of substance itself is to us anything more than that of a *cause*; whether, in a word, the dynamical theory of the universe was not the one grounded upon the most solid and philosophical basis. To this notion he at length yielded his full assent, and in his article on Leibnitz avowed himself a believer in the spiritual monadology advocated by that great founder of German idealism. In the whole of the process by which our author had gradually advanced from the ideology of Cabanis to the absolute

\* Several philosophical treatises of M. Maine de Biran, besides those above mentioned, have been published since his death. A posthumous work, entitled "Nouvelles Considérations sur les Rapports du Physique et du Moral de l'Homme," was edited by M. Cousin in 1834, together with the examination of M. Laromiguière, and the article on Leibnitz. In 1841, three vols. entitled "Œuvres Philosophiques de Maine de Biran," were also edited by M. Cousin, containing all the other treatises above referred to, besides some additional opuscula and fragments.

† See particularly Part i. sec. 2, on the Principle of Causality; and Part ii. chap. 2, on Power, Will, and Personality.



dynamical spiritualism of Leibnitz, he had relied simply upon his own power of reflection. Disciple of none, he had philosophized simply within the region of his own consciousness; so that whatever merit some may deny him, there are none, assuredly, who can reject his claim to that of complete originality. "Of all the masters of France," remarks M. Cousin, "Maine de Biran, if not the greatest, is unquestionably the most original. M. Laromiguière only continued the philosophy of Condillac, modifying it in a few important points. M. Royer-Collard came from the Scottish philosophy, which, with the rigor and natural power of his reason, he would have infallibly surpassed, had he completely followed out the labors which form only the least solid part of his glory. As for *myself*, I come at the same time from the Scottish and German school. M. Maine de Biran alone comes only from himself, and from his own meditations."\*

After this general notice we must attempt to afford our readers a glance into some of the peculiar tenets of the philosophy now under consideration. In order to unfold the fact and expound the nature of man's natural activity (the hinge upon which the entire system turns), M. Maine de Biran analyzes the whole of what is contained or implied in a given action; for example, a movement of the arm. When I move my arm there are three things to be observed:—1. The consciousness of a voluntary effort; 2. The consciousness of a movement produced; and 3. A fixed relation between the effort on the one hand and the movement on the other. Now, the source or cause of the whole movement is the *will*; and this term *will* we now use as virtually synonymous with self. Whether we say I moved my arm, or my will moved it, the sentiment is exactly identical. Hence the notions of *cause*, of *will*, of *self*, we find to be fundamentally the same; and several truths are by this means brought to light of great importance in metaphysical science.†

First, it becomes evident that we possess a natural activity, the seat of which is in the will; so that whether we regard man as a thinking or an acting being, yet it is the will which alike presides over and regulates the flow of our thoughts, or the course of our actions. Secondly, we infer that the will is the foundation of personality; that my will is virtually myself. And, thirdly, we infer that to will is to *cause*, and that from the inward consciousness of

\* Preface to the "Fragments Philosophiques,"

† Preface to the "Nouvelles Considérations," p. 10.

volition, viewed in connection with the effect produced, we gain our first notion of causality. These three points, as Cousin has shown us, embrace in a small compass the whole philosophy of M. Maine de Biran. He first seizes, with admirable sagacity, the principle of all human activity, as resident in the power of the will, exemplifying it even in the case of those muscular movements which may appear to the unreflecting to be simply the result of nervous excitement. Having established the principle of activity, as residing in the will, he proceeds to identify the will with our very personality itself, showing, that the soul is in its nature a force, the very essence of which is not to be acted upon, but to act. Finally, he proves that we gain our first notion of causality from the consciousness of our own personal effort; and that, having once observed the conjunction of power exerted, and effect produced, in this particular case, we transfer the notion of cause thus originated into the objective world, and conclude by analogy the necessity of a sufficient power existing for every given effect.\*

M. Maine de Biran having thus drawn forth, from the depths of his own consciousness, these undoubted facts of our voluntary existence—facts which the sensational school had neglected or denied—proceeded to show how these facts avail to explain the nature of the human faculties, and the origin of our fundamental ideas. Here, however, he began to carry his principles to an extreme, which led him from his original attachment to sensationalism, at length, into the opposite theory of pure idealism. First of all, in the ardor with which he applied the powers of the will to the elucidation of the facts of our consciousness, he was induced to neglect those other phenomena, which spring forth, not from our voluntary, but from our rational nature. Hence, as we before showed, he threw a doubt over the notion of *substance*, as being a purely *rational* idea, and proposed to account for it under the notion of *cause* or *force*. This principle expanded, naturally led to a dynamical theory of physics, and was the ground on which our author gave in his adherence to the monadology of Leibnitz, as being the best explanation of the material universe upon the dynamical hypothesis.”†

Had he rested here, however, it might have been difficult to show that he had carried his notion of causality too far, the dynam-

\* These results may be seen partly in the *Mémoire* “De la Décomposition de la Pensée,” but more clearly in the “Nouvelles Considérations,” Pt. I. sec. 1, and Pt. II. secs. 1 and 3; also in the “Examen des Leçons de Philosophie,” secs. 8 and 9.

† Doctrine Phil. de Leibnitz.

ical system of the universe being much more easy to deride than to disprove; but in his limitation of the principle of causality to the idea of our own *personal* effort, he showed the evident germ of pure subjective idealism. That we derive our first notion of cause from the consciousness of our own voluntary power of action, there can be little doubt; but M. Maine de Biran proceeds to show that our *whole notion* of causality is but the transference of this consciousness to the objective world. In doing this, he strips the category of causality of its necessary and universal character, and admits a principle, the result of which was perhaps unseen by himself, but which we have fully carried out in the idealism of Fichte. The universe, affirms M. de Biran, consists of certain *powers* or causes which are in operation; and these powers or causes are only known as objective realizations of our own inward personal effort. In other words, everything is a power, and all power is conceived of only as *my own* power. This principle duly expanded makes *self* the absolute ground of everything, and must ultimately bring the subjective form of ideal philosophy to its well-known climax.\*

It is true, M. Maine de Biran did not live to evolve these results; but, once shut up within his own subjectivity, there can be little doubt but that, if he had developed his whole system with the same logical rigor with which he sketched it out, we must have had a second edition of Fichte's philosophy indigenous to France. It was his intense absorption in the contemplation of the power of the will—in the fundamental notion of *self*—that led to the neglect of the other two elements; giving us another proof that the closest analysis, whilst evolving truth, ever errs, from its very concentration upon the question which it illustrates, and showing the importance of an enlightened eclecticism, in aiding the true advancement of philosophy. We must now come, therefore, to consider the metaphysical labor and services of him, whom we may term the founder of modern eclecticism in France—I mean Victor Cousin.

M. Cousin was born in the year 1792, and entered, whilst quite young, upon a course of instruction in the normal school, which was to fit him to be himself an instructor of the youth of his country. In 1811, he had the good fortune to attend the captivating lectures of M. Laromiguière, and, following them up soon after by

\* See M. Cousin's refutation of M. de Biran, in his preface to the "*Nouvelles Considérations*," p. 27, *et seq.*



the still more deep and earnest philosophy of M. Royer-Collard, he determined to devote his whole life to the investigation of moral and metaphysical truth. So extraordinary was the aptitude which he manifested in this department, that on the retirement of M. Royer-Collard, in the year 1815, he was at once appointed to the vacant chair of philosophy in the normal school. For five years he carried on his labors there with the utmost assiduity. Ardent, and even passionate, in his love for metaphysical speculation, he worked onwards with untiring energy towards the reformation of the French philosophy; and being endowed by nature with an eloquence extremely rare in minds devoted to the most abstruse subjects, he soon fired the youth who attended his lectures with an enthusiasm kindred to his own.\*

In the year 1820, however, his progress was arrested. Looked upon with suspicion by the contemptible government which had been reinstated at Paris, by the wealth and blood of all Europe, he was obliged to retire from his office in the normal school into private life. This event, however unjustifiable in itself, yet contributed in the end to the speedier advancement of philosophy in France. Having become already versed in the principles of Kant and Fichte, and having two years previously spent some time at Heidelberg and Munich in company with Jacobi, Schelling, and Hegel, Cousin now embraced the opportunity of making another journey beyond the Rhine, and becoming more nearly acquainted with the idealistic philosophy as it then existed in Germany. In Berlin he renewed his acquaintance with *Hegel*, who had then become the most brilliant star in the philosophical hemisphere of that country; and it is from the study of *his* ideas on the philosophy of history, and the history of philosophy, that the most attractive features of the modern eclecticism have to be dated. In 1828, being recalled from his banishment, he delivered lectures on the history of modern philosophy, before a brilliant auditory, in Paris, and raised his reputation, both for eloquence and philosophy, to the highest pitch. In 1832, according to that noble policy which reckons learning and wisdom the best title to aristocracy, he was made a peer of France, and in 1840 was created Minister of Public Instruction. His published works on philosophy consist—1. of a succession of brief articles, called “Philosophical Fragments,” in the two admirable prefaces to which, we have at once the most lucid and succinct portraiture

\* His three earliest pupils, MM. Jouffroy, Damiron, and Bautain, attest the efficiency of his instructions as a professor.



of his views and doctrines. 2. Several courses of Lectures on the History of Philosophy, delivered at Paris, as above stated. 3. A course of Philosophy, in thirty-eight Lectures, founded on the fundamental notions of the true, the beautiful, and the good. 4. Translations or Editions of Plato, Aristotle, Proclus, and other ancient and modern philosophers; and, lastly, a course of admirable Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant.\*

This brief sketch of the life of M. Cousin is sufficient at once to point out the schools in which he has studied, and the influences under which he has lived, thought, and written. He came upon the stage exactly at the moment when the sensational school was retiring from its prominent position in the public regard. M. Laromiguière, though himself, by profession, an ideologist, yet was virtually undermining the doctrine he professed; and M. Royer-Collard, having made an open revolt, cherished and matured in the mind of his pupil (so soon to be his successor) the desire of carrying on the reformation thus auspiciously commenced. His retirement to Germany, though compelled by a false act of arbitrary power, yet was fortunate in giving him leisure and opportunity to sink down into the quiet depths of spiritualism, by which the German philosophy is characterized; and, finally, the public approbation with which he was greeted on his return, all impelled him forward in a career, in which he seemed destined to obtain the highest distinction.

His own account of his philosophical experience is precisely in accordance with what we have just stated. "M. Laromiguière," he remarks, "initiated me into the art of decomposing thought; he exercised me to descend from the most abstract and general ideas which we now possess, to the most common sensations, as their primary origin; and to give an account of the play of the faculties, whether elementary or complex, which intervene between the two. M. Royer-Collard taught me, that if these faculties have any need of being solicited by sensation, in order to produce even the least idea, yet they are subjected in their action to certain interior conditions; to certain laws; to certain principles, which sensation does not explain, which resist all analysis, and which are the natural patrimony of the human mind. With M. de Biran I studied

\* Of *Proclus*, Cousin has published a complete edition. Another and more complete course of lectures, on the Scottish school, was also published in 1846. With the exception of the lectures on Kant and those on the Scottish philosophy (both which have appeared more recently), I have made all quotations from the Brussels edition of his works (3 vols. large 8vo, 1840).

especially the phenomena of the will. This admirable observer taught me to disentangle, in all our notions, and even in the most simple facts of consciousness, the part of our voluntary activity—that activity in which our personality reveals itself.

“It was under this triple discipline that I was formed; and it was thus prepared that I entered, in 1815, upon the public instruction of philosophy in the normal school, and the faculty of letters.

“Before long, I had exhausted, or thought that I had exhausted, the teaching of my first masters: after France and Scotland, my eyes naturally turned to Germany. I then learned German, and set myself to decipher, with infinite pains, the principal movements of the philosophy of Kant, without any other aid than the barbarous Latin translation of Born. I thus lived two entire years, as though buried in the depths of the Kantian psychology, and simply occupied with the passage from psychology to ontology. I have already said how psychology itself instructed me, and how I traversed the philosophy of Kant. That of Fichte could not detain me long; and at the end of the year 1817, I had left the first German school behind me.” After stating his acquaintance with Schelling and Hegel, M. Cousin thus refers to their relative merits, and his own obligations to them:—“The admirers of Hegel consider him as the Aristotle of another Plato; the exclusive partisans of Schelling only see in him the Wolf of another Leibnitz. However it may be with these rather lofty comparisons, no one can deny that to the master has been given a powerful invention, and to the pupil a profound reflection. Hegel has borrowed much from Schelling; and as for myself, much more feeble than either, I have borrowed from both. It were folly to reproach me with this, and it is certainly no great humility in myself to acknowledge it.”\*

After these few preliminary remarks, we must now\* proceed to give our readers as clear an insight into the doctrines and spirit of this philosophy, as our limited space may admit. In order to do this, we cannot follow a better guide in the arrangement of the materials, than that which the two prefaces, above alluded to, afford us. According to the statements there made, every important question in philosophy may be regarded as belonging either—1, to the *method* of investigation; or, 2, to psychology; or, 3, to ontology. These three heads, together with some peculiar views on the history of philosophy, pretty fully exhaust the topics which are treated of in the metaphysical system we are now considering.

\* See the preface to the second edition of the “Fragments,” vol. ii. p. 19.

I. We direct our attention to the doctrine of *method*, as set forth in the philosophy of Cousin. There are, in all, two grand methods which it is possible to follow in conducting metaphysical investigations; and these are the rationalistic and the psychological. The rationalistic method strives to sink down at once into the very depths of existence; to grasp the absolute or fundamental principle, from which everything proceeds; and then to explain all phenomena by the operation of this law. In this way, for example, Spinoza deduced everything from the idea of *substance*—regarding this as the sole and universal existence—and making all nature but different modes of its one immutable essence. Fichte found *his* absolute existence in the idea of *self*, and from the law of our personal activity, sought to explain all the objective phenomena around us. In like manner, the reader may see, by referring to our sketch of the German idealism, how Schelling and Hegel, each assuming an absolute existence, and a fundamental law, deduced from thence the whole multiplicity of things, human and divine. This process of logically deducing all phenomena from some fundamental principle, is called by the German writers a *construction*—by ourselves it would be termed simply an *hypothesis*. Whatever plan, therefore, may be proposed for *construing* the universe, that is, for deducing the existence of all things from certain fundamental laws, this plan answers to our idea of the rationalistic method of philosophy.

The psychological method is, in many respects, directly the reverse of this. Instead of beginning with the fundamental law of our being, it first of all cautiously looks out upon the facts of human nature, which present themselves to our attention. These facts it attempts to observe and to classify; and thus gradually to discover the law or principle by which they recur. The one method is deductive, the other inductive; the one is synthetical, the other analytical; the one starts from the general, and descends to the particular; the other begins with particular facts, and ascends to the general; the one is the ancient method of philosophy applied to metaphysical truth; the other is the modern Baconian organum, carried into the region of mental science. Now, of these two methods, Cousin advocates, with all earnestness and decision, *the latter*. He considers mental science to be a science of facts, as well as all other; he applies the aid of observation and experiment *here*, as well as everywhere else; in a word, he views it as one legitimate branch of inductive philosophy.



Whilst, however, he decides for the psychological method, he is careful to free it from those defects under which it has ever labored in the hands of sensationalism. The method may prove deficient from two causes; either from not starting with a due observation of facts as the data, or from not reasoning upon them with patience and accuracy. Locke, for example, although admirably adapted to reason upon the facts presented, did not begin with a sufficiently wide observation, and thus vitiated many of his results. The followers of Locke betrayed a still greater deficiency; for not only did they exclude many undeniable facts of our rational and moral nature from their system, but they reasoned upon what facts they did admit in so perverted a strain, as often to change their very character, confounding all the phenomena of memory, of judgment, of the emotions, &c., with those of simple sensation. The psychological method, therefore, in the hands of Cousin, demands that we enter by reflection into the innermost chambers of the soul; that we investigate every fact of the consciousness which presents itself there, with the utmost accuracy; and, lastly, that, having obtained these data, we reason upon them with precision, and deduce everything which seems to be warranted by the rules of sound logic. Such is the method by which Cousin proposes to prosecute the study of intellectual science.\*

II. We come to psychology itself, *i. e.* the application of the method just described to the elucidation of the ideas and faculties of the human mind. Admonished on the one hand by the oversimplification of the ideological school, and on the other by the very imperfect classification advanced by the Scottish system in the hands of Reid and Stewart, Cousin has taken the middle course between the two. Without entering at length into the grounds on which he has reasoned the subject out in his own mind, we state at once, that he enumerates amongst the facts of our consciousness three generic classes;—1. Those of the Will; 2. Those of the Reason; 3. Those of Sensation. 1. With regard to our natural activity, M. Cousin has adopted almost entirely the theory of M. Maine de Biran. The principal points in this theory are these two—that the whole groundwork of our activity is in the will; and that it is the will which peculiarly constitutes our distinct personality. The peculiarity of those things which possess no personality is, that they are entirely under external influence. For this reason, nature is impersonal. It has no source of power

\* Vol. ii. pp. 11 and 12; also, vol. i. p. 247, *et seq.*



in itself; it is absolutely at the command and in the hands of some extrinsic agency. Just such, also, would man be without the will. Sensations are produced by direct impulse from the external world—ideas of pure reason arise spontaneously from the very constitution of our faculties; both the one and the other influence us as certainly and as necessarily as outward force influences the material objects around us. It is the will alone, therefore, which makes us free agents.

Previously to the development of the will, man is but a part and parcel of the natural universe; he is a unit which is at the absolute disposal of the forces, physical or spiritual, in the midst of which he is situated. The moment, however, we are conscious of an inward power, which we variously term activity, liberty, will, that moment we assume a new character in the world. Far from being now passively given up to the agency of other causes, we become in our turn a cause which reacts upon them, and which does its part, whether it be greater or less, in directing the future course of our life. This *will*, therefore, is in a peculiar sense *the man himself*. While his sensations and his ideas are *fatal*, originating from without (the one teaching him contingent, the other necessary truth), the determinations of the will originate from within, and going forth from our own activity, enstamp everything to which they apply with the impress of *personality*.

To this fact of liberty, moreover, there not only attaches itself the notion of personality, but, also, that of moral obligation. Sent forth, as we are, not subject to an unconditional necessity, but intrusted with the power of the will, we are under the moral *obligation* of exerting ourselves for the accomplishment of our proper destiny in the world. Wherever man goes, he carries with him his *power*; and, consequently, has both his duties and his rights. Thus, in a word, the whole aspect of our moral, social, and political life, with all their spheres of activity, spring from the fundamental fact, that, endowed with liberty, we are the master of our own actions, which actions have at once to be restrained from injuring the inviolable rights of others, and to be so directed, as to fulfil the requirements of our own personal obligations.\* Without dwelling, however, upon this branch of psychology, we pass on to that which M. Cousin has elaborated with the greatest care and ability; I mean,

\* Vol. ii. p. 33—36. See, also, the preface to the posthumous works of M. Maine de Biran, vol. ii. p. 148.

2. The phenomena of our rational or intellectual life. The first thing to be accomplished in analyzing this part of our nature, is to reduce the multiplicity of facts, which at once present themselves, to their primary elements. Almost all philosophers have recognized the importance of such a reduction, but very few have attempted to perform it. Of these few, Aristotle classified our notions from the objective point of view; and in his table of categories, gave us a complete list of those "*summa genera*," to one of which every individual object that we have any knowledge of belongs. Kant, after the revolution of many centuries, produced another table of categories, made from the *subjective* point of view, in which table he has given us a deduction of all those laws or forms of the understanding, by which the material of our knowledge is shaped into distinct ideas. Cousin, again, takes up the same great problem, applies to it a closer method of analysis learned from the schools of modern idealism, and comes to the conclusion, that the whole phenomena of our reason may be reduced to *three* integrant and inseparable elements, which at once constitute its true nature, and govern all its manifestations.

The first of these elements is that which is variously expressed under the terms unity, identity, the absolute, the infinite. This we term the category of *substance*, as being the one immutable essence of the Eleatics and of Spinoza. The second of these elements is that which, in direct opposition to the former, we term plurality, difference, the conditioned, the finite, the phenomenal. This we name the category of causality, as being the principle of all change, of all the passing phenomena of the universe. Now, these two categories are not to be viewed as separated from each other—they are, in fact, indissolubly united. The absolute can only manifest itself in the phenomenal—the phenomenal only subsists in the absolute; which facts, accordingly, give rise to a third element or category, namely, that of the mutual relation which these two primary notions bear to one another. According to Cousin, these three elements manifest themselves wherever the human reason is seen in operation. They form the type, as it were, under which every subject is viewed, and absolutely govern the whole development of an intellectual nature. To give an idea of the extensive application which is made of this doctrine of categories, we subjoin the following list, which shows them as reproduced in the various spheres of human thought or activity:—

First Category.	Second Category.	Third Category.
Unity . . . . .	Multiplicity . . . . .	} Relation between them.
Absolute Space . . . . .	Bounded Space . . . . .	
Absolute Existence . . . . .	Dependent Existence . . . . .	
Eternity . . . . .	Time . . . . .	
Infinite . . . . .	Finite . . . . .	
Primary Cause . . . . .	Secondary Cause . . . . .	
Substance . . . . .	Phenomena . . . . .	
Mind . . . . .	Thoughts . . . . .	
Beau Ideal . . . . .	Beau Real . . . . .	
The Perfect . . . . .	The Imperfect . . . . .	
Contraction . . . . .	Expansion . . . . .	
Subject . . . . .	Object . . . . .	

Thus we see thought, morals, science, the fine arts, nature, in a word, every subject of human contemplation, appearing under the type of this trinity, that emanates from the fundamental laws of our nature."\*

But now comes a most important inquiry, namely, how far these dictates of our reason possess *authority*; *i. e.*, how far we can depend upon them as unfolding truth, not merely as it appears to us, but as it really exists in its own intrinsic nature. It is in the discussion of this question that we come to some of those peculiar doctrines which belong alone to Cousin and his school of philosophy. Instead of admitting that our knowledge is *relative*, that we see truth only as it stands in connection with ourselves, that we have no other pledge of its objective accuracy than the perfection of the instrument by which we attain it, he contends that the truths with which reason is conversant are *absolute*, and that they both are, and ever must be, precisely as we see them, altogether independent of ourselves, and of the medium through which they are known. So far, indeed, he is only treading in the footsteps of his German instructors; but with respect to the grounds on which the point is argued, he stands quite by himself. There are two chief arguments which Cousin uses to prove the absoluteness of our knowledge.

*The first is derived from the impersonality of reason.* In this point he shows the philosophy of Kant to be altogether erroneous. That philosopher made all our necessary ideas and *a priori* conceptions to be simply the results of the subjective laws of our own minds. All abstract truth was to him but the personification, or the reflection, of our own intellectual constitution. The two forms of our sensational life—time and space; the twelve categories of the understanding; the three regulative principles of the pure reason giving origin to our notions of the soul, the universe, and

\* Vol. i. pp. 31-34. Vol. ii. p. 32.



God, all had, in the Kantian system, no objective validity whatever. The germ of Fichte's subjective idealism, in fact, was already latent in the philosophy of Königsberg.

Now, to contravene these false and sceptical results, Cousin labors to prove, that the dictates of pure reason are not merely personal, that they do not simply express what *seems to be real*, according to the constitution of our own faculties, but that they are the direct reflection of absolute and eternal things. *The will*, we are conscious, is, in all its various efforts, enstamped with the impress of our personality; our volitions are our own, our desires are our own, our emotions are our own; that which we experience of all such phenomena is not experienced in the same manner by any one else. But not so in the case of our intellectual judgments. Necessary truth does not belong to one human being more than another, it has no element of human personality about it—it is the common patrimony of every rational nature—a direct emanation from God. Such being the case, the decision of reason, within its own peculiar province, possesses an authority almost Divine; if we are led astray by it, we must be led astray by a light from heaven.”\*

But the question now arises, How can we strip any fact of our own consciousness of its personality? Our rational judgments and *a priori* conceptions, it might be argued, are as much phenomena of our own individual minds, as are our volitions, desires, or emotions. Admit that a truth *appears* to be absolute and necessary, yet it only appears so by virtue of the constitution of our own intellects. How, then, can we establish the objective validity of *anything*, when it is certain that *everything* must be seen only through the medium of our own subjective consciousness?

This leads us to the second ground on which Cousin argues the authority of reason; one which is derived from the distinction between its *spontaneous* and its *reflective* movements. When we take up a subject designedly, when we search into its evidences, when we put in array the arguments for and against, and at length draw our conclusion, we term this step a *reflective* process. The subject has, by this process, to be analyzed or *separated* into its component elements; and then the truth of the whole to be deduced from the validity of the parts. Now here, there are abundant opportunities for errors to creep in. The analysis may be incomplete—some of the parts, for example, may be omitted, others may occupy a too

\* Vol. ii. p. 32; also “Leçons sur la Philosophie de Kant,” lec. 8.



prominent, or too subordinate place ; in a hundred different ways the conclusion, as a whole, may be vitiated. Reason, therefore, when it operates *reflectively*, can have no *absolute* authority—it is involved in all the imperfections of our own personality. There is, however, another process by which we arrive at knowledge, or truth, and that a purely spontaneous one. There are moments of thought in which the mind mingles up no element whatever of its own personality. It does not analyze, it does not search, it does not voluntarily attend, it does not even reflect ; but yet there is a distinct apperception of certain truths which it simply receives. Almost every one must be conscious, that his best thoughts come upon him like flashes of inspiration ; and that when he has most lulled to rest the workings of his own *personal* effort, then most he seems to stand in the unobstructed light of eternal things. If, therefore, there be a direct and immediate apperception of absolute truth—if there be moments in which the mind receives the pure light of heaven without any intermixture of its own personality, then reason, viewed as a spontaneous principle, must possess an authority which cannot be gainsayed or resisted.

That such an internal apperception *really* exists, Cousin considers to be an unquestionable fact which may be verified by observation. We subjoin his own words. “It is by *observation*,” he remarks, “that within the penetralia of the consciousness, and at a depth to which Kant never descended, under the apparent relativity and subjectivity of necessary principles, I have succeeded in seizing and analyzing the instantaneous, but veritable fact of the spontaneous apperception of truth—an apperception which, not immediately reflecting itself, passes unperceived in the depths of the consciousness ; yet is the real basis of that, which later under a logical form, and in the hands of reflection, becomes a necessary conception. All subjectivity and reflectivity expires in the spontaneity of apperception. But the primitive light is so pure, that it is unperceived ; it is the reflected light which strikes us, but often in doing so, sullies with its faithless lustre the purity of the former. Reason becomes subjective by its connection with the free and voluntary *Me*, which is the type of all subjectivity ; but in itself it is impersonal, it does not appertain any more to one than to another, it does not even appertain to humanity as a whole, its laws emanate only from itself.\* Such is the chief ground on

\* Vol. ii. p. 33, “On the Impersonality and Spontaneity of Reason ;” see also vol. i. pp. 44-47, 369, 388, 392, and vol. ii. p. 118.

which Cousin repels the latent scepticism of a too subjective philosophy, and such the method by which he proposes to place the lofty authority of reason, as an evidence for objective reality, upon an immovable foundation.

3. We pass on now to the third division of psychology; that, namely, which takes cognizance of the phenomena of *sensation*. Sensation with Cousin, as with most other philosophers, is the faculty which acquaints us with the various facts and changes of the outward world. In saying this, however, we do not pronounce anything upon the nature of objective existence around us; we do not decide, for example, whether it be material in the ordinary sense of the term, or whether it be not. That there are real phenomena, independent of ourselves—that there is a *Not-me* limiting and opposing the *Me*, our consciousness in every sensation attests; but it has yet to be shown what may be the nature, and what the constitution, of this outward existence. The common sense of mankind regards it as consisting of hard, impenetrable, and passive material; in short, of *atoms*, characterized by nothing except their *vis inertiae*. But is this dictate of common sense to be accepted as philosophically correct? or does metaphysical analysis place the question in any other and clearer light? Let us view the evidence of the case.

The moment we begin to reflect, we are conscious of certain states of mind produced within us from some source out of ourselves. But, by a law of our reason, whenever we experience change, either within or around us, we necessarily attribute that change to some *cause*. Hence, the primary notion we must have of the external world is that of an assemblage of causes, which are able to produce given effects. These causes, of course, we refer to some real existence, which is the principle, or substratum, on which they depend; that is, we view them under the notion of certain finite, but independent forces, which bound, resist, or modify the exertions of our own volition. Let us put the question in another light. All our knowledge of external nature arises from internal impressions made by it, through the medium of sensation, upon the mind. But what is it that can create impressions? Manifestly *powers, forces, causes*, something that is *active* and productive of impulse: nothing that is barely passive, as matter is generally accustomed to be viewed, can possibly do so. Science, in fact, has at length come to view all material existence in this light. The principles of mechanics are entirely comprised in the doc-

trines of statical and dynamical *forces*; that is to say, all material phenomena are viewed as the productions of certain *powers*, acting with different intensities, and in different directions. "What natural philosopher," says our author, "since Euler, seeks after anything beyond forces and laws? Who speaks now of atoms? And even with respect to molecules, the newer form in which atoms have been viewed, who regards them otherwise than as an hypothesis? If this fact is incontestable, if modern science occupies itself only with forces and laws, I conclude rigorously from hence, that natural philosophy, whatever it may know, or not know, is by no means *materialistic*, that it became *spiritualistic* the very day it rejected all other methods, except observation and induction, which can lead us to nothing but forces and laws."\*

From these and similar remarks, it is abundantly evident that Cousin is to be regarded as an idealist, although certainly of a very moderate kind, when compared with the German school in which he was instructed. He does not lose sight of the fundamental idea of nature: far from it; he makes it play a very important part in his system; but he entirely denies its passive, inert, atomic character; he views it all under the type of *power* or cause; in short, he makes it homogeneous with mind, only mind in its lower and as yet unconscious development. Perhaps we should not be wrong in placing him by the side of M. de Biran and Leibnitz, as the advocate of a dynamical system of monadology; indeed, with reference to the latter, he says, "The more I advance, and the more I believe in philosophy, the more clearly I seem to see into the mind of that great man; and all my progress consists in understanding him better."

Here we must close our sketch of Cousin's psychology; brief as our explanations have necessarily been, we trust that the careful reader may gain from them a correct idea of its general nature; and if not, he has only to betake himself to the two prefaces prefixed to the "Philosophical Fragments," in order to gain the most definite views on this part of his philosophy.

III. We must now go on to the third point which was to claim our attention, and that is, Cousin's *Ontology*. There are three different lights in which the subject of ontology has been viewed by modern philosophers. First, by the German idealistic writers it has been regarded as the starting point of all intellectual science.†

\* Vol. ii. p. 37.

† Also by the Abbé de Lamennais in his "Esquisse d'une Philosophie."



Commencing with the notion of *being*, in its most general and abstract character, they proceed to add to it one attribute after the other, until they have philosophically constructed the entire universe. The whole problem of the German metaphysics is, in fact, to determine what is the prime absolute essence from which all things proceed, and then to expand the *law* by which bare existence rises, through all the multiplicity of its changes and gradations, to its most pregnant and most fully developed character. These systems, therefore, are exclusively *ontological*.

Secondly, the English and Scottish writers generally interdict the ontological branch of philosophy, as lying beyond the reach of our faculties. Intellectual science with them is confined, for the most part, to psychology, that is, to the analysis and classification of our mental phenomena. Whatever the universal testimony of the human faculties attests, that they accept as being true "*quoad nos*," and on this principle they refute the pretensions of scepticism; but they do not admit the possibility of attaining to the mysteries of absolute existence, or of expounding what, independently of our own perceptions, is the essential constitution of anything whatever. Now, Cousin regards these two opinions as extremes, both of which it is necessary to avoid. In place of commencing, as the Germans do, with ontology, he affirms that the psychological method is the only true one; that we can only properly begin by an analysis of the *facts* of our conscious existence; but, instead of bounding himself by the limits of psychology, he affirms the possibility of finding a solid passage from the subjective world to the objective—from phenomena to real existence. Since reason is not *personal* in its nature, but receives truth spontaneously, by direct and immediate apperception, he considers that we may, by the medium of this faculty, attain at once to the knowledge of essential and absolute existence.\*

Existence appears to us under three different forms. First of all, we are conscious of our own personal and voluntary energy; this we are led by reason to attribute to an essential and ever-abiding existence, which we term self, or *the me*. Again, reason in like manner instructs us, whenever we are conscious of some outward influence exerted upon us through the medium of sensation, to attribute this influence to real and essential causes, the aggregate of which we term *nature*. But both self and nature are finite; they cannot, therefore, be self-existent or absolute, and must

\* Vol. ii. p. 15.



consequently have proceeded from another source, which bears the attributes of self-existence, infinity, eternity. Here, then, reason leads us to the absolute essence from which all things proceed, by which all things are sustained, in which all things subsist; and that essence is God.

According to this view, it is evident that God comprehends the universe in himself, and that all finite existence is but the emanation from his infinite existence. Still Cousin does not view Deity by any means in the pantheistic light, which was advocated by Spinoza and the Eleatics. "The God of consciousness (we quote his own words) is not an abstract God, a solitary sovereign, banished beyond creation upon the throne of a silent eternity and an absolute existence, which resembles existence in no respect whatever; he is a God at once true and real, at once substance and cause, always substance and always cause; being substance only inasmuch as he is cause, and being cause only inasmuch as he is substance; that is to say, being *absolute* cause, one and many, eternity and time, essence and life, end and middle, at the summit of existence and at its base, infinite and finite together; in a word, a Trinity, being at the same time God, Nature, and Humanity."\*

Cousin's view of the Divine nature is confessedly somewhat recondite and indistinct. While on the one hand he altogether repudiates the charge of pantheism, yet on the other hand it is difficult to say how his opinions, as above described, can be altogether vindicated from it. Time, perhaps, will show how far he has grasped, or how far misconceived, the whole subject. There is one point, however, upon which Cousin has expressed himself with great clearness and precision, and that is the essential comprehensibility of the Absolute by the human mind. This is, in fact, a principal feature in his philosophy. He considers that the establishment of the Absolute as a fundamental notion, and a constitutive principle of the human intelligence, is his chief merit as a philosopher, and upon this he grounds the peculiar claims of his modern system of eclecticism.

Now, of all questions which philosophy proposes for our investigation, there is probably not one so difficult to sound to its depths, not one on which the greatest thinkers have so much differed, as upon this. Sir William Hamilton has reduced the philosophical hypotheses, which have obtained respecting our knowledge of the absolute or unconditioned, to four distinct heads:—1. The Abso-

\* Vol. ii. p. 17.

lute is altogether inconceivable, every notion we have of it being simply a *negation* of that which characterizes finite and conditioned existence. This opinion he holds himself in common with the English and Scottish schools of modern times. 2. The Absolute, though not an object of real knowledge, yet exists subjectively within our consciousness as a regulative principle. Kant held this opinion: he believed that pure reason necessarily gives rise to the *notion* of the infinite and unconditioned, which notion we view under the threefold type of the soul, the universe, and the Deity; but he did not admit the objective reality of these conceptions. He regarded them merely as personifications of our own subjective laws or processes. 3. The Absolute cannot be comprehended in consciousness and reflection; but it can be gazed upon by a higher faculty, that of intellectual intuition. This is the well-known doctrine upon which Schelling has erected his system of philosophy. 4. The Absolute can be grasped by reason, and brought within the compass of our real consciousness. Such is the theory of Cousin himself.

Now, here we have three minds standing severally at the head of the respective philosophies of Britain, France, and Germany, assuming each a different hypothesis on this subject; while Kant, the Aristotle of the modern world, assumes a fourth. Under such circumstances he must be a bold thinker, who ventures to pronounce confidently upon the truth or error of any one of these opinions. Few, perhaps, in our own country would be inclined to side either with Kant or Schelling; the great point of dispute is most likely to be between Sir W. Hamilton and M. Cousin; that is to say, whether the infinite, the absolute, the unconditioned, be really cognizable by the human reason, or whether it be not; whether our notion of it be positive, or whether it be only negative. And here we freely confess that we are not yet prepared to combat, step by step, the weighty arguments by which the Scottish metaphysician seeks to establish the negative character of this great fundamental conception; neither, on the other hand, are we prepared to admit his inference. We cannot divest our minds of the belief, that there is something *positive* in the glance which the human soul casts upon the world of eternity and infinity. Whether we rise to the contemplation of the Absolute through the medium of the true, the beautiful, or the good, we cannot imagine that our highest conceptions of these terminate in darkness, in a total negation of all knowledge. So far from this, there seem to be flashes of light, in-

effable it may be, but still real, which envelop the soul in a lustre all divine, when it catches glimpses of *infinite* truth, *infinite* beauty, and *infinite* excellence. The mind, instead of plunging into a total eclipse of all intellection, when it rises to this elevation, seems rather to be dazzled by a too great effulgence ; yet still the light is real light, although to any but the strongest vision, the effect may be to *blind* rather than to illumine. It is not by negations that men are governed ; but it is before the idea of eternity and infinity that our fiercest humanity is softened and subdued. Until we are driven from this position by an irresistible evidence, we must still regard the notion of the infinite, the absolute, the eternal, as forming one of our fundamental notions ; and one which opens to us the highest field, both for our present meditation and our future prospects.

Before we conclude this sketch of Cousin's philosophy, we must advert to his merits as a historian. In doing this, we pass over the labors he has undertaken, as a translator and an editor, although, perhaps, he will not owe the least portion of his fame, *eventually*, to the admirable manner in which he has introduced the modern thinker into the profundities of Plato, and many other regions of philosophy, hitherto but imperfectly explored. A better foundation for modern eclecticism could not be laid, than that which such an exposition of the thoughts of great minds affords. In addition to this, however, the most attractive, perhaps, of our author's own writings, are his Lectures on the History of Philosophy. Many of the sentiments, it is true, are drawn from German sources ; but still, they are so thoroughly individualized, and portrayed with so much force and perspicuity, that we hardly know which most to admire, the profound thinking by which they were first conceived, or the clearness and beauty by which they are here embellished. To comprehend the history of philosophy aright, Cousin affirms that we must have a distinct knowledge of the constituent elements of the human reason. Now, observation shows us, that these elements are three : the infinite, the finite, and the relation subsisting between them. These three notions, accordingly, must have been the foundations of philosophy in every age ; and in whatever manner they naturally develop themselves in the mind of humanity, such must have been the course of philosophy, historically speaking, from the earliest period.\*

In the individual reason, the first idea that occupies the mind, is

\* Vol. i. p. 56.



that of the *infinite*; gradually this is lost sight of, to make way for the knowledge of finite objects; and, lastly, the two are united, and viewed in their mutual dependency upon each other. Just such has been the development of reason, in the whole course of humanity. The early oriental philosophy was grounded upon the idea of the infinite and absolute substance; the Greek philosophy, culminating in Aristotle, was the philosophy of the finite; and, lastly, the modern philosophy has developed the relation of the finite to the infinite, and is thus destined to complete the whole cycle of human thought. These three eras, in fact, have been severally characterized by the existence of certain grand ideas, which, though seen in their pure and abstract form in philosophy, yet have virtually pervaded the whole religious and political existence of mankind. Thus, in religion, the first era gave rise to Pantheism, the second, to Polytheism, the third, to Theism; whilst, in politics, the first was the age of monarchy, the second, of democracy, the last, of mixed government.\*

It is not to be imagined, however, that these three eras of the world were each *exclusively* occupied with the fundamental conception in its various developments, upon which its grand peculiarities were founded. All the elements of reason must have really existed in every period; and although each has had its time of predominant influence, yet every age of mankind has exhibited, in a subordinate degree, different systems of philosophy; according as different minds have been led, more or less, to the contemplation of God, of nature, or of humanity. Hence, we find, as we gaze down the stream of history, the constant reproduction of the four philosophical tendencies, which we have indicated by the terms sensationalism, idealism, scepticism, and mysticism; and upon these four points, accordingly, the whole history of philosophy must turn. Each of the four systems is based upon a true idea, and has its own peculiar mission to perform in the development of human reason; but each is involved in error, arising from its partial and exclusive view of the elements of which that reason consists. Their error, therefore, is the error of deficiency; they are each true in what they teach, and each false in what they reject. In order to obtain the whole truth, they must be all united; the doctrines which are mutually contradictory will then be exploded, and those which are able to stand side by side, will be retained.†

\* Vol. i. p. 125, *et seq.*

† Vol. i. p. 144, *et seq.*



This, then, is precisely the aim of modern eclecticism ; it is the summing up of the positive and negative results of all other systems, and the complete separation of that which is valid truth, in them all, from that admixture of error in which it was before involved. Such is the purpose (one truly worthy of a great mind) with which Cousin has devoted himself to the study of history ; and although we might be more gratified had he written systematic works upon philosophy, yet there can be little doubt, but that in following his present course, he is laying a far more solid foundation for the future stability and glory of the school which he has founded. In fine, as a popular expositor of philosophy, we doubt whether Cousin has anything approaching a rival in the present age. There may be, in Germany, more profound thinking, and more power in the purely abstract faculties, but we know of no philosopher of modern times, who unites to great originality of thought, so extraordinary a power of conveying his ideas in the most clear and eloquent language. The German thinkers, from their want of perspicuity, write almost exclusively for Germans ; and, even of them, only for a small portion ; but the philosophy of Cousin, although comprehending some of the most recondite points of the German metaphysics, yet has already found its way throughout Europe and America.

That this should be the case, we cannot but sincerely rejoice. Although, it is true, we could not subscribe to the system as a whole, yet we know of none which, diving deep into the interior of the human consciousness, comes forth at length with so little admixture of mere hypothesis, and so large a development of truth. Much as some might be startled at the idealism manifested in his analysis of *sensation*, we doubt whether any other ontological theory of the natural world has been propounded, so little involved in contradiction, and so thoroughly capable of explaining all the facts of the case. Metaphysics and natural philosophy, it appears to us, are both tending to a dynamical system of the universe, similar to that, of which the mighty mind of Leibnitz caught the distant glimpse.

In the analysis of *reason*, again, we can almost entirely coincide. The development of its constituent elements—the exposition of its spontaneous and reflective movements—the vindication of its authority—all present to us philosophical doctrines of the greatest value ; all resting, moreover, upon the foundation of psychological facts, as evidence of their truth. We do not deny that these doc-

trines may yet require to be modified and perfected ; but still there are pregnant germs of truth in them, as they now stand upon the pages before us. To the analysis of the *will*, there may be some objection, owing to its complete isolation from the reason ; but even here, too, there are the elements of much truth, which only need a little more development, to place the philosophy of our voluntary activity upon a firm and intelligible basis.

There is one part, however, of the system now before us, which we must distinctly except from the eulogy we have pronounced upon the rest, and that is the part in which our author carries the results of his philosophy into the region of theological truth. There are two points in particular, which touch very closely upon the ordinary sentiments of the Christian world, and which open the door for an almost boundless advocacy of religious scepticism. These are, first, the notion he has given of Deity itself ; and, secondly, that which he has given of inspiration.

With regard to his notion of Deity, we have already shown how closely this verges upon the principle of Pantheism. Even if we admit that it is *not* a doctrine, like that of Spinoza, which identifies God with the abstract idea of substance ; or even like that of Hegel, which regards Deity as synonymous with the absolute law and process of the universe ; if we admit, in fact, that the Deity of Cousin possesses a conscious personality, yet still it is one which contains in itself the infinite personality and consciousness of every subordinate mind. God is the ocean—we are but the waves ; the ocean may be one individuality, and each wave another ; but still they are *essentially* one and the same. We see not how Cousin's Theism can possibly be consistent with any idea of moral evil ; neither do we see how, starting from such a dogma, he can ever vindicate and uphold his own theory of human liberty. On such Theistic principles, all sin must be simply *defect*, and all defect must be absolutely fatuitous.\*

But the most dangerous door into religious scepticism, is the use which Cousin makes of the spontaneity of the human reason, in order to explain the phenomena of inspiration. Reflection alone is considered to be the source of error ; while that pure apperception, that instinctive development of thought, which results from spontaneity, is absolutely infallible. Now this spontaneity, it is said, is the foundation of religion. Those who were termed seers,

\* This part of Cousin's philosophy has excited a very lively opposition from various quarters. In France it has been contested by Bautain, in his "Psychologie Expérimentale", Disc. Prélim. ; and by M. Maret, in his "Essai sur le Panthéisme," chap. i.

prophets, inspired teachers, of ancient times, were simply men who resigned themselves largely to their intellectual instincts, and thus gazed upon truth in its pure and perfect form. They did not reason, they did not search, they did not reflect deeply and patiently; they made no pretension to philosophy; but they received truth spontaneously, as it flowed in upon them from heaven. Now, in one sense, all this may be true; but, according to Cousin, this immediate reception of Divine light was nothing more than the *natural* play of the spontaneous reason; nothing more than what has existed, to a greater or less degree, in every man of great genius; nothing more than what may now exist in any mind which resigns itself to its own unreflective apperceptions. This being the case, revelation, in the ordinary sense, loses all its peculiar value; every man may be a prophet; every mind has within it the same authority to decide upon truth, as those minds had who dictated the Bible; we have only to sit and listen to the still small voice within, to enjoy a daily revelation, which bears upon it all the marks of absolute infallibility.

This doctrine, of course, may seem very plausible and very flattering; nay, it may arraign some evidence, and boast the explanation of many facts; but, assuredly, it can only be erected and established upon the ruins of all the fundamental evidences of Christianity. When the advocates of this natural spontaneous inspiration will come forth from their recesses of thought, and deliver prophecies as clear as those of the Hebrew seer—when they shall mould the elements of nature to their will—when they shall speak with the sublime authority of Jesus of Nazareth, and with the same infinite ease rising beyond all the influence of time, place, and circumstances, explain the past, and unfold the future—when they die for the truth they utter, and rise again, as witnesses to its divinity—then we may begin to place them on the elevation which they so thoughtlessly claim; but, until they either prove these *facts* to be delusions, or give their parallel in themselves, the world may well laugh at their ambition, and trample their spurious inspiration beneath its feet.

Much as we admire Cousin, while he keeps within his proper limits, and much as we are disposed to maintain the truth of his philosophy, in most of its principal features, we cannot but repudiate, with all our energy, his attempt to intrude upon the sacred province of the Christian revelation. If he will stand up as a theologian, and fight the battle upon its proper grounds, let him do so,



and there are plenty to take up the gauntlet which he throws down ; but it is not the part, which his own philosophy would dictate, to raise a new theory of revelation to supersede all the rest, without considering the facts and the evidences which the Christian revelation can display.

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In the foregoing pages, we have seen the process by which the principles of the ideological school have been gradually overthrown, and those of eclecticism established. M. Laromiguière began by secretly undermining the bulwarks of sensationalism ; M. Royer-Collard made the first open breach in the wall ; and M. Cousin has spent his life in rearing the edifice of a new philosophy. Our next duty is, to exhibit the effects which this philosophy has produced in France, and to describe the *school*, to which it has given rise. To do this, will be a work of but little difficulty. The school itself is so recent, that, as yet, it has had no time to assume many variations ; and, although it numbers several thinkers of great independence among its advocates, yet their opinions do not depart so widely from those of the founder, as to require any lengthened explanation.

By far the most celebrated of Cousin's pupils and supporters was M. Theodore Jouffroy. This popular and eloquent writer was born in the year 1796, and having studied philosophy in the faculty of literature, under the direction of Cousin, was appointed soon after Professor of Moral Philosophy in the same institution,—a post which he retained until his death. M. Jouffroy first became known to the public at large through the medium of a translation of Dugald Stewart's "Moral Philosophy." To this translation he prefixed an essay or preface, in which he vindicates the study of intellectual science against the attacks of those who would banish all, except natural philosophy, out of the domain of human investigation. The preface, as a whole, shows that the author has deeply imbibed the principles and the spirit of the Scottish metaphysicians, whilst, at the same time, he rises occasionally to those more expansive views of philosophical truth, which were inculcated in the lectures of his illustrious predecessor.

Nothing can exceed the clearness, and even the beauty, with which he establishes in this little production the fundamental prin-



ciples of intellectual philosophy. As all science must be built upon *facts*, he first inquires, whether there be not an order of facts peculiar to themselves, and valid in their nature, upon which mental philosophy, as a branch of inductive science, can be erected? This leads to a very lucid exhibition of the contrast which exists between the external facts of sensible observation, and the internal facts of consciousness; in which he shows, that no fact cognizable by the senses could possibly be arrived at by a direct consciousness, and that no fact of consciousness could ever be known through the senses. He concludes, therefore, that two orders of facts exist, perfectly unique in their character and perfectly distinct from each other.\* This point once established, he proceeds to prove, that the facts of consciousness can be accurately observed, and that their laws can be determined with the same precision as the laws of the material world. Next, with regard to the *communication* of the facts of consciousness to others, he proceeds to show, that although sensible evidence cannot be given, as is the case in natural philosophy, yet, that the same end is attained by appealing to what passes within the consciousness of our fellow-creatures, who, in all important points, are able to verify the truth of our descriptions by their own personal experience. That nothing may be wanting to establish his point, he goes on to prove, that physiologists themselves, even while they deny a separate order of spiritual facts, virtually proceed upon them in all their own investigations;—natural science being as much grounded upon abstract and *philosophical* principles, as any other. In this manner he successfully deduces the conclusions, that there *are* valid facts on which to build a science of psychology; that these facts can be accurately determined;—that they can be communicated by one mind to another; and, that every branch of human research virtually admits them.

The great requirement for the advancement of psychological science is, that theories should be renounced, that hasty inductions should be given up, and that we should apply ourselves to the colligation of all the facts of consciousness, and to their proper classification, with the same diligence that has been expended upon natural philosophy. Many problems, respecting the nature of the human mind, are, at present, confessedly enveloped in darkness

\* M. Jouffroy has overlooked the point in which the *morale* and the *physique* virtually unite, that of muscular motion. This exception must always be taken against the absolute distinction here made, between the facts of observation and those of consciousness.

and obscurity. "Whence, then," says our author, "is the light to come? Where are we to seek for it? In a more profound observation," he replies, "of the *phenomena of human nature*, and especially in the study, which has been greatly neglected and which is yet in the background, of the facts of consciousness." Such, in brief, is the clear and common-sense view which our author has taken of the proper method of philosophical research.\*

The next source to which we must go, in order to estimate the philosophical character of M. Jouffroy, is a collection of articles upon a variety of topics, entitled "*Mélanges Philosophiques*." These were originally contributions to a philosophical journal, termed "*The Globe*," but have since been published by the author in a distinct form. In these articles, we see the zealous pupil and successor of Cousin, the genuine modern eclectic, touching, more or less, upon all points within the range of intellectual philosophy, and pouring light derived from all directions upon them. We feel ourselves in company with a master mind, one who does not servilely follow in the track pointed out by others, but, yet, who knows how to appreciate the labors of all true-hearted thinkers, and to make their results tell upon the elucidation of his own system.

According to the views here advanced, man is to be regarded and studied in a twofold point of view; inasmuch as he comprehends in himself two separate elements—the *thing* on the one hand, the *person* on the other. The former is human nature as subjected to its necessary laws and impulses; the other is human nature as the possessor of that extraordinary *personal* power, by which our natural capacities are directed, and our whole existence moulded to the intelligent accomplishment of its destiny. These two elements constitute in us two distinct modes of life,—the impersonal life and the personal; and it forms one of the chief features in the system before us, that every faculty we possess is regarded as being developed, either, on the one hand, according to the necessary laws of human nature, or, on the other hand, under the superintendence and direction of our personal power. With regard to the faculties themselves, Jouffroy has reduced them to the following heads:—First, the *personal faculty*, or the supreme power of taking possession of ourselves and of our capacities, and of controlling them; this faculty is known by the name of liberty, or will, which, however, designates it but imperfectly. Secondly, the *primitive in-*

\* This preface is translated, and published in Clark's "Student's Cabinet Library," together with many other of Jouffroy's *Miscellanies*.

*clinations* of our nature, or that aggregate of instincts or tendencies which impel us towards certain ends and in certain directions prior to all experience, and which at once suggest to reason the destiny of our being, and animate our activity to pursue it. Thirdly, *the locomotive faculty*, or that energy by which we move the locomotive nerves, and produce all the voluntary bodily movements. Fourthly, *the expressive faculty*, or the power of representing, by external signs, that which takes place within us, and of thus holding communication with our fellow men. Fifthly, *sensibility*, or the capacity of being agreeably or disagreeably affected by all external or internal causes, and of reacting in relation to them by movements of love or hatred, of desire or aversion, which are the principle of passion. Sixthly, *the intellectual faculties*. This term comprises many distinct powers, which can be enumerated and described only in a treatise on intelligence. This may suffice to give what is peculiar to Jouffroy's system; in most other respects he has followed in the footsteps of his master.\*

M. Jouffroy, however, is, by profession, a *moralist*, and, consequently, his chief duty is to explain and illustrate this part of our constitution. With many of the lectures delivered by him, in this capacity, he has favored us, and we have learned to appreciate and admire the profound, yet eloquent criticism with which he has analyzed all the principal moral systems of our own and of other countries. Without dwelling, however, upon his character as a *critic*, we must glance for a moment at the peculiarities which exist in his own views of ethical philosophy.†

According to Jouffroy, the primary question in ethics is, "Whether there be such a thing as good, and such a thing as evil?" The whole life of mankind, he contends, furnishes one long and continued affirmative to this question, inasmuch as men are continually engaged in deliberating, choosing, and deciding between them. Allowing, then, that good and evil exist, the next point is, to determine *on what ground* one thing is to be considered preferable to another. Here our author goes into an elaborate discussion to show that we must regard everything as good on the one hand, or evil on the other, *in proportion as it serves to aid or to prevent the fulfilment of our destiny*. The great problem of human destiny, then, lies at the foundation of all morality; and it is according to

\* *Mélanges Philosophiques*, art. "Des Facultés de l'Âme Humaine," p. 263.

† Jouffroy's lectures on moral philosophy have been translated in America, and published as part of a series of works, entitled "Specimens of Foreign Literature," by George Ripley of Boston, United States.



the bearing which every action has upon this that we must determine its ethical quality. To pronounce *a priori* concerning actions, whether they are good or bad, is impossible. This entirely depends, first, upon the being to which they apply; and next, upon the influence they may have on the destiny for which that being was created. Good, in the case of any particular being, is simply the fulfilment of *its own specific destiny*; and good, *in itself*, is the accomplishment of the destiny of all beings; *i. e.*, the existence of perfect order and harmony in the universe, where everything proceeds uninterruptedly to its end. In this world we find that there are perpetual interruptions in the fulfilment of our destiny. This constitutes *moral evil*; and it is only when these obstacles shall be all removed, when all intelligent beings gaze upon the great end of their creation, and proceed without lingering to the realization of it, that evil will be subdued, and the reign of moral perfection commence. For this realization, however, we must look beyond the present to a future, and that a sinless world.

For the further development, however, of these views, we must refer the reader to Jouffroy's lectures, or for a briefer sketch of them, to an article on "Good and Evil," which will be found among his "Mélanges Philosophiques." As a *metaphysician*, Jouffroy will, probably, ever rank considerably below Cousin, both in depth and originality; since, in fact, he hardly went beyond the psychological stand-point of the Edinburgh school; but as a moralist, he leads the way in the eclectic school, without any appearance of a rival. We believe, that there is no writer of the present day who has grappled with the great problems of moral science, so manfully and successfully—and who has succeeded in throwing so much fresh light upon a subject which has commanded the energies of the greatest minds.

In Cousin and Jouffroy we have at once the two first, and the two greatest advocates of modern eclecticicism in France.\* The doctrines, however, which these have been inculcating in the Normal School at Paris, during the last twenty years and more, have been warmly received by many others; and not a few have gone forth from their instructions to disseminate the same principles throughout the country. M. Philippe Damiron may be regarded

\* Jouffroy's views on eclecticicism, may be seen in his *Mélanges Phil.* articles, "Comment les Dogmes finissent," "De la Sorbonne et des Philosophes," and "Réflexions sur la Philosophie de l'Histoire." The most elegant critique upon the genius and philosophy of Jouffroy with which I am acquainted, is that of M. Sainte-Beuve, in his admirable "Portraits et Critiques Littéraires," vol. i. of the Second Series.



as the third in order of time and eminence, to whom eclecticism owes its present position among the philosophies of Europe. Brought up under the tuition of Cousin, he soon proved himself a worthy pupil of such a master, and has been since rewarded with the Professorship of Philosophy, at the Normal School of Paris, and the College of Louis the Great. M. Damiron has published a course both of mental and moral philosophy, which holds a somewhat distinguished place among the metaphysical productions of the day.\* The work, however, by which he is best known, and to which I beg now to acknowledge my own obligations, is entitled, "Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France au Dixneuvième Siècle." This work, which has gone through many editions, and found its way into many countries, is almost indispensable to the history of modern philosophy in France, as it gives perhaps the only complete account of the progress of metaphysics in that country, from the period of the Revolution down to the period of its publication.†

The views of M. Damiron are formed closely after the model of the school from which he came; and in him, accordingly, eclecticism has found a warm, and, we may add, an able advocate. To detail his philosophical opinions would only be to tread over again the same ground which we have already traversed; and we shall content ourselves therefore, with giving to our readers the spirited remarks upon *eclecticism*, with which he closes the volume above mentioned, and which we regard as being, upon the whole, a fair estimate of the real worth and excellence of the system. "It would not be impossible," remarks our author, "in strictness, to make a whole philosophy without the aid of eclecticism. But such a philosophy would be a monstrosity; and for the work, there would be requisite a genius which, alone and by itself, without aid or co-operation, could equal in the best accomplishments the combined genius of the greatest philosophers; those who, in fact, were great only through their preceptors, and through history. The human mind, however, cannot count upon such a singular phenomenon; and eclecticism is much rather its proper production, because, after all, it is, in one view of the case, only the natural procedure of humanity, namely, labor by concert and association. Eclecticism, in fact, is philosophy by association; the philosophy

\* "Cours de Philosophie," 4 vols. 8vo.

† This "Essai" was published first in 1827. The last edition appeared in 1835, with copious additions on the more recent authors. A still more elaborate work of his pen has lately appeared, entitled "Essai sur l'Histoire de la Phil. en France, au xviii<sup>e</sup> Siècle." Two thick vols. 8vo, 1846.

which, by means of criticism and history, enriches itself with all the legitimate acquisitions that belong to the past. And this philosophy is of so much the greater worth, because it is more in communion with anterior philosophies, because it participates in a greater number of doctrines, and because it has more out of which to choose, and knows better how to exercise its choice. \* \* \* \*

I called eclecticism philosophy by association: cannot I call it also philosophy without exclusion—a sort of philanthropy applied to the true ideas of all times and all countries? The larger it is in its admissions, so long as it be discreet, and the more it embraces, so long as it does so wisely, so much the more legitimate and pure it is—so much the more accomplished.

“It would be difficult to affirm, that eclecticism will never change, whether it be in relation to its criterion (which is less probable) or to its erudition, which latter will almost infallibly happen; for already, since it has been in the world, it has undergone many modifications, both in the *rule* and in the *manner* of its choice. At present it is *spiritual*; spiritual from proceeding upon the data of psychology. This tendency I believe to be good, and consequently to be durable; but, nevertheless, I believe, it may take some day another. In the same manner, it now moves in a sphere of erudition without doubt very extensive; but how can we say that it will not proceed, and extend itself beyond it, since it has yet altogether a new world, that of the East, hitherto little known, to pervade and to master? There is, then, a chance that in process of time it may become varied and modified.

“But what will be the consequence? Clearly, that it will be amended, fortified, perfected; not that it will come to an end. It will not come to an end, at least, until it is fully completed; and then it will be able to be said, that the humanity of the present has all the knowledge of the past; that it has what is better and more true, the sum of all science, and that nothing therein is deficient. Until then, eclecticism, whether we know it or not, will be, and will continue to be, the necessary procedure of every spirit in progress.

“As we see, and as I have said, eclecticism is not for philosophy a definitive state; it is not an end, it is a means; but this means is yet for a long futurity, and in our days, more than ever, of indispensable application. Humanity did not commence and will not finish with eclecticism; but it has lived, and will live and develop itself by eclecticism, which is to the world of ideas that

which association is to the world of persons ; or which is (to speak more accurately) but one form of association itself. More than ever do I find this conviction strengthened, the more I penetrate, though with many difficulties, yet with much happiness, onwards into the history of philosophy." Such is M. Damiron's estimate of the philosophical school, to which he feels it his honor and happiness to belong. We have been the more anxious to present our readers with this extract, because it gives so decided an answer to the frequent cry which has been raised against the eclectic system, as though it undertook to develop a whole body of philosophical truth, from the mere juxtaposition of all the conflicting opinions of the present or of former days. Eclecticism, in Cousin's sense, is not a mere syncretism ; it contains a definite philosophical method, and would develop truth even were there no other systems to compare with it. But convinced that all earnest thinkers have had some true ideas to work upon, it sets itself manfully to determine what they are ; and strives to add the testimony of humanity at large to its own investigations. Admitting, then, that the eclectic starts with a clear philosophical method, we know not how it is possible more firmly to strengthen its positions than to concentrate upon them the universal truth, that flows through all the philosophies which history or the present age present.

Cousin, Jouffroy, and Damiron, form the foremost rank among the abettors of eclecticism ; but many names might yet be mentioned in the list of metaphysical writers, which show that there is a "corps de réserve," to carry on the work as they may be removed from the scene of action. The extraordinary development of a spiritual philosophy under the name of eclecticism, within recent times, presents to us a phenomenon, which is well worth our most earnest attention. From the fall of the French republic the age of grossness and materialism began to decline. A new tone of thinking gradually sprang up, which, while it rejected the excesses of democracy, yet had tasted too much of the principles of national liberty, to admit for a moment the idea of any return to the old régime. This party, which gathered together after the restoration, under the title of *liberalism*, numbered many ardent and philosophical minds, who looked forward to some bright futurity, in which a deep philosophy and a rational faith should spread their benign influence throughout society at large.

The eloquent lectures of Cousin matured these views, and stimulated these hopes ; and when the hand of tyranny silenced both



his own voice and that of his no less eloquent pupil, and drove them from the halls of public instruction, their deep murmurs only found a readier ear among the more enlightened of the age, as they rolled upwards upon society from the retirement to which persecution had banished them.

"The Globe," which was commenced in Sept. 1824, became the rallying point around which those master spirits of the age were gathered together. Its first editors were MM. Dubois and Leroux; but M. Jouffroy may be regarded as the presiding genius of its earlier efforts. While these philosophic minds found here an organ for their murmurs and their hopes, there were others of no inconsiderable influence who indirectly gave it their support. M. Cousin saw in it the fruits of his own otherwise ill-rewarded labors. M. Guizot could not but favor a journal in which his own enlightened views upon European civilization were maintained and expounded; M. de Broglie, and others of like spirit, secretly rejoiced in the broad and liberal principles which were there brought before the public. At the same time, some of the higher order of minds, who had gained new views of society in the school of St. Simon, took part in the movement; so that, in fact, the way was prepared for the brief, but brilliant, revolution of 1830, which repelled the base attempts of a restored monarchy to lay its hand upon the liberties of the nation.

This point once achieved, and a period of repose having succeeded, the genius of philosophy began to rouse up its energies to fresh action. From the accession of Louis Philippe to the present hour, the French press has been sending forth a metaphysical literature, which in learning and eloquence will bear a comparison with any former period of philosophical activity. The fruits of it, as seen in the theological and mystical schools, we have already noticed; it remains for us only to notice it more especially in connection with the spirit of modern *eclecticism*.

The labors of eclecticism, during the last fifteen or twenty years, may be distributed into three classes,—viz. translations or editions, histories, and original philosophical works. In rendering an account of these labors, we cannot attempt to give anything like a complete list of all the works of a school which has been so unusually productive; we shall merely point out, therefore, some of the principal movements of its more recent activity.

1. With regard to the labors of the editor and translator, it will be recollected that Cousin himself, the head of the school, has nobly



led the way in his translation of Plato, and his beautiful editions both of Proclus and Descartes; M. Jouffroy and others have translated the works of Reid and Stewart; and M. Peisse, in addition to "Stewart's Elements," has given to the French public the collected fragments of Sir W. Hamilton. The Charpentier editions of the earlier movements of modern philosophy have all appeared under the direction of the eclectic school. M. Saisset, professor at the normal school, has furnished us with an admiral translation of Spinoza. M. Jules Simon, also of the normal school, has performed the same office for Descartes, so far at least as his philosophical writings are concerned; and M. Jacques, professor at the Royal College of Versailles, has edited Leibnitz's and Clarke's philosophical writings in the same form.

With regard to the German philosophy, it may be said now to exist almost complete in the French language. Through the industry of M. J. Tissot, professor at Dijon, and M. Jules Barni, professor at the college of Charlemagne, together with MM. Mellin and Trullard, the great works of the immortal Kant are now before the French public in their most intelligible form. M. Paul Grimblot has completed the translation of the two main productions of Fichte and Schelling, the "*Wissenschaftslehre*" of the one, and "*Transcendentaler Idealismus*" of the other. Several of their other works have also appeared in able translations by M. Francisque Bouillier, of Lyons, by M. C. Husson, by M. Nicolas, professor at Montauban, (author of a defence of Eclecticism against the attacks of Pierre Leroux,) and by several other laborers in the same cause. Of the works of Hegel, the lectures on *Æsthetics* have already appeared, under the care of M. Bénard of Rouen; while some of his other writings, as well as the letters of Jacobi upon Spinoza, are we believe now in progress. When we add that Vico's "*Scienza Nuova*," and the philosophical letters of Galluppi, have appeared in recent translations, and that the grand productions, in fact, of every nation, are appropriated sooner or later to the aid of eclecticism, we may reasonably look forward to the advantage of possessing, ere long, the philosophical thinking of the world, in the most lucid and precise of all the languages of mankind.

2. The history of philosophy is a subject to which eclecticism naturally directs its best energies. Nurtured as it is in extensive erudition, it ever seeks to develop the progress of human knowledge, and get as near as possible to the catholic thinking of man-

kind. M. Cousin has here also led the way at once by his lectures, and by the second series of his philosophical fragments. Since his example has been before the world, many are the works illustrative both of ancient and modern philosophy, which have emanated from the French press. The logic of Aristotle is now translated, and has been copiously illustrated in a *mémoire* presented to the "Académie des Sciences" by M. Barthélemy St. Hilaire. The schools of Megara, of Elis, and of Eretria, have found an historian in M. Mallet, professor at the College of St. Louis; and the philosophical school at Alexandria, with its wondrous mixture of western thought and oriental mysticism, has excited especial attention amongst the eclectic historians. M. B. St. Hilaire, and M. Simon, have each brought their varied and extensive erudition to bear upon the illustration of this remarkable page in the history of the human mind.

The history of Cartesianism has not unnaturally claimed a considerable share of attention from those who wish to vindicate for France the honor of an original and native philosophy.\* The last work of M. Damiron, entitled "*Essai sur l'Histoire de la Philosophie en France, au 17<sup>me</sup> siècle*," gives a very full and clear description both of Descartes himself, and of the school which he originated; and the *mémoire* of M. Demoulin, entitled "Cartesianism," which gained the prize at the French Institute, may be regarded as one of the most complete expositions of the Cartesian spirit and doctrine which have yet appeared. Other works on the same subject have been published, the principal of which have been already noticed in our former remarks upon the Cartesian school of the seventeenth century.

The philosophy of Germany, being in fact the great repository of spiritualism in human thought, has confessedly exerted a vast and almost unappreciable influence upon the modern schools of France. Cousin himself confesses that it was under this influence that his own powers were at once awakened, and directed to the higher problems of fundamental truth. About ten years since, M. Barchou de Penhoen, an intelligent French writer of Portuguese extraction, published an "*Histoire de la Philosophie Allemande depuis Leibnitz jusqu'à Hegel*," in two vols., 8vo. This was the first attempt that was made to give a systematic and connected view of the German idealism in the French language. M. Ch.

\* The still earlier philosophy of France, that of the scholastic age, is portrayed in M. Rémusat's recent work on *Abélard*.

Renouvier, in his "Manuel de Philosophie Moderne," has recently undertaken the same task in a more brief, but equally intelligible form, and, in truth, evinces himself a decided leaning to the Hegelian method. In 1846, M. Abel Rémusat published his report on the mémoires presented to the Académie des Sciences, respecting the present state of intellectual philosophy in Germany; which he has introduced by a preface filled with the most masterly illustrations and criticisms upon the principal systems of that country. The prize mémoire by M. Willm is now in process of publication, (the first of four volumes having just appeared,) and promises, when completed, to be by far the most full and detailed exposition of the German philosophy, from Kant to Hegel, which has yet been sent forth from any other than the German press.\*

3. With regard to original works on philosophy, the eclectic school has already furnished a considerable number, although it has not yet been long enough in existence to produce any great variety of opinion and research. Several of the professors in the different universities of France have published a "Cours de Philosophie," (as, for example, M. Mazure of Poitiers); but these are most frequently adapted rather to instruct the student in the *elements* of intellectual science, than to develop any new or advanced views with regard to the great problems of philosophy. Some of the most important points, however, of the philosophy of Cousin, have been elaborated in separate works, among which we may mention, especially, those of M. Gruyer, entitled "Des Causes conditionnelles et productrices des Idées," and "Principes de Philosophie Physique," intended to give the basis of the metaphysics of nature. Of others, M. F. Bouillier has discussed the doctrine of the impersonal reason; M. Ed. Mercier, the relations between faith and science; while M. Ernest Bersot of Versailles, in a work entitled "Du Spiritualisme et de la Nature," has ventured upon those most difficult of all questions, which refer to the relations subsisting between creation and the Creator, both in their speculative and practical import.

There is one work, however, to which we are desirous of making especial reference, inasmuch as it sounds the first note of division within the camp of the eclectic philosophy, and that is an "Essai

\* We might have mentioned here the Life of Kant by M. Amand Saintes, and a History of the German Rationalism, by the same author; but it does not appear to pertain to the eclectic school. The same may be said of Dr. Ott, the author of the work before referred to on the philosophy of Hegel. This acute writer belongs to the historical school of M. Buchez.

d'une Nouvelle Théorie sur les Idées fondamentales," by F. Perron. The author having given an historical sketch of the rise and progress of the modern spiritual philosophy in France, enters into a searching critique of the principal doctrines of eclecticism, as professed by the school of Cousin. In this critique, he attempts to show that the relations which have been established between our fundamental ideas, with regard to their logical and chronological conditions, are perfectly arbitrary and unfounded; that the characters of necessity, of immutability, and of universality, by which they are said to be distinguished, cannot be claimed for them in any exclusive and peculiar sense; that their origin is no more *a priori*, than the origin of anything is which we grasp by the understanding; that the attempt to account for their objective validity by the impersonality of reason, has signally failed; and, finally, that the nature of the categories has been altogether misunderstood.

Having concluded his critique, the author attempts to prove, that there is one, and only one cognitive faculty in man; that this cognitive faculty is adapted to grasp objective truth directly and immediately; that the properties of things which we perceive, are but the modes of their existence; that all our knowledge begins with these concrete perceptions; and that the categories are not forms of thought, nor pure ideas, nor principles of common sense, nor anything else other than the pure abstractions, or rather the highest generalizations which we form from individual existences. Having argued this theory respecting the notions of time and space, substance and phenomenon, cause and effect, the finite and the infinite, the good, the beautiful, and the true, the author ends by giving a complete list of nine categories. We may ask respecting things around us—

	Category of Existence.
1. If they are?	" Essence.
2. What they are?	" Mode.
3. How they are?	" Causality.
4. By what?	" End.
5. Why?	" Space.
6. Where?	" Time.
7. When?	" Number.
8. How many?	" Relation.
9. In what relations?	

These ideas, he shows, give us a complete view of all the different relations in which things can be viewed; that they are neither



inadequate nor redundant; and that they express precisely the highest generalizations to which the human mind can arrive, with regard to every inquiry it institutes on the proper determination of existences at large.

The author has argued his points with considerable ingenuity, but, as it appears to our own mind, is far from sustaining them against the school he opposes. We are not sorry, however, to see these questions brought down upon the arena of contest; so long as they are regarded as fixed and unquestionable data, the progress of philosophy is only likely to be impeded; the opening of a new campaign, gives additional hope with regard to the progressive results of philosophy for the future.

The mature age of a philosophy generally gives rise to an *Encyclopædia*, which regards all philosophical questions from its own peculiar point of view. The highest results of the eclectic school are now being embodied in the "*Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques*,"—perhaps the most complete attempt which has yet been made at a universal biography and critique of all philosophers and their systems. Above thirty of the first names which France can boast at the head of her metaphysical literature, appear as contributors to this noble undertaking—an undertaking which not only supplies a desideratum in their own literature, but which must prove of essential service to the progress of philosophy itself, as being the most careful historical analysis which has yet appeared of the catholic thinking of mankind.\*

## SECT. II.—*Collateral Branches of the Eclectic Philosophy.*

In the former section we have attempted to trace the process by which the materialism that overran France at the commencement of the present century, was gradually undermined and supplanted by a more earnest and spiritual philosophy. Were we, however, here to close our sketch of the French eclecticism, although we may have tracked its actual progress up to the present time, yet we should be far from doing justice to many profound thinkers and excellent writers, who have aided in combating the doctrines of materialism, and clearing the way for these new and nobler principles. There are some authors in all countries, who, without ad-

\* For an exposition of the philosophical principles which have guided the criticisms of this work, see Appendix, note G.

dressing themselves *immediately* to the solution of metaphysical or ethical problems, yet, by the whole cast and spirit of their writings, exert a great influence upon the philosophy of their age. There are others, moreover, metaphysicians by profession, whose erratic genius defies all classification, and disowns the limits of all schools, but who nevertheless obtain their share of influence in the world of thought. To pass these by, in giving a faithful history of philosophy, would be an inexcusable omission; and we shall attempt, therefore, to compress into a small compass a succinct account of the *collateral streams* which have aided in swelling the now deepening channel of the spiritual eclecticism of France.

I. And first, let us notice one or two writers who, in the *earlier portion* of the century, lent their aid to the first attacks which were made upon the reigning ideology. Foremost amongst these we should reckon Benjamin Constant, a mind imbued with many of the best qualities, both of the French and the German character, and free from most of the vices peculiar to each. The influence he possessed before and during his banishment by Napoleon, was rather of a personal character than exerted through the press; but on his return he became widely celebrated for his political writings, and finally for his remarkable theologico-philosophical work, entitled, "*De la Religion considérée dans sa Source, ses Formes, et ses Développements.*" In this, his last legacy to the world, he gave the most decisive proofs of his anti-sensational tendency; and, with a brilliancy of wit and eloquence for which he was almost unrivalled, defended his more spiritual views against the attacks of materialism.

His great principle is, that the religious feeling in man is purely *instinctive*, that it arises neither from sensation, nor from a sense of fear, nor from physical organization; but from the mysterious and Divine constitution of the human soul. As Constant has written so little of a purely metaphysical nature, we cannot assign him a very prominent place in the history of speculative philosophy; by his whole style of thinking, however, by his religious views, by his earnest feelings, as well as by his direct arguments, he contributed his share in dethroning materialism from its long-continued sway, and in abetting the first efforts of the eclectic school. In connection with Benjamin Constant we must also mention *Madame de Staël*. It was in company with Constant, together with Villers, the first French expositor of Kantism, and Schlegel the elder, that that extraordinary woman learned to ap-

preciate the profound and spiritual philosophy of Germany. A more admirable medium could hardly be imagined for adapting the lofty thoughts of Germany to the French mind, than was afforded by her warm and enthusiastic style. Had the intense researches of Fichte or Schelling been sent forth, just in the form in which they flowed from the pens of the authors, to the French public in its own tongue, they would, in all probability, have been thrown aside in disgust, and left hardly an impression behind them. No sooner, however, were these thoughts divested of all technicality, no sooner were they stripped of their abstract form, and held up to view by the light of her ardent enthusiasm, than they penetrated into every mind, and, with the admiration which they at first excited, left behind a longing for better things. France learned first, from the pages of this its fair preceptress, that the philosophy of Germany was not a tissue of unintelligible mysticism; it learned, that behind a forbidding exterior there were deep and burning thoughts, which only needed a fitting channel, to shed their influence upon every branch of human knowledge. Although no *system* of philosophy was inculcated by her—none even explained, with any approach to logical accuracy—yet it was impossible not to feel, in the perusal of her writings, that there existed a philosophy, far nobler than the dreams of materialism; that there were sentiments and impulses in the human soul, which could never be brought down to the vibrations of a nerve, or the commotions of the brain. Mad. de Staël, though not herself a philosopher, did perhaps more for philosophy in France, than any writer of the same age. She seized upon the few prominent ideas which she had learned to love and to cherish, in her literary retreat at Coppet, and sent them forth, clothed with all the brightness of her own enthusiastic spirit, to awake a response in the depths of every earnest and thoughtful mind. In doing this, she well performed her mission, and exerted an influence, to which the country, from which she lived an exile, owes a lasting debt of gratitude.

Another writer, of a class entirely different from those we have just mentioned, but who has also had an indirect influence upon the renovation of the French philosophy, is M. Degérando.\*

\* M. Degérando was born at Lyons, A.D. 1772. When his native town was besieged by the republican army in 1793, he took arms in its defence, and with difficulty escaped into Italy, where he remained for three years. After his return to France he joined the Army of Italy; but owing to his rising literary reputation, was soon appointed to civil service. During the régime of Napoleon he was advanced from one



This somewhat celebrated author first appeared before the public in the year 1800, by the publication of a work, proposing to exemplify the relation between the signs of our thoughts and the art of thinking.\* At that time M. Degérando, in common with all the other philosophers of the country, was a disciple of Condillac; but, although professedly belonging to the ideologists, yet he was far from adopting the extreme opinions, for which many of them became remarkable, manifesting even then a decided repugnance towards the materialistic tendency of the age. In 1802 M. Degérando gave in a mémoire to the Academy of Berlin, "De la Génération des Connaissances Humaines," which was honored with the highest prize of distinction. The mémoire consisted, first of a historical view of the different theories which have obtained in different periods of the world, on the origin of our ideas; and, secondly, of an analysis of the true elements of human knowledge. This treatise, which was published at Berlin, in 1802, formed the basis of a much more complete and valuable work, entitled "Histoire Comparée des Systèmes de Philosophie relativement aux Principes des Connaissances Humaines," and which appeared in Paris in 1804. This work, although estimating all systems of philosophy from the ideological point of view, yet seemed to spread abroad a more popular knowledge, than had hitherto existed, of the world's great thinkers, and of the views and opinions which they had entertained. The author showed himself clearly to possess a liberal and enlightened mind—to be a sincere seeker after truth, and not to be fettered closely by the trammels of any system. Accordingly, as the spirit of the age began to change—as the reaction against the sensationalism of the Encyclopædic period began to show itself, M. Dégerando was one of the first to move forward in the stream, and to welcome every fresh sign of real improvement. In 1822, he commenced a second edition of his History of Philosophy, revised, enlarged, and remodelled to the altered character of the age. Here we find an increased attention given to all those systems which partake of an idealistic character, and a general tone of thinking, far more profound and *spiritual* than that which was observable in the former edition.

In this latter form, the "Histoire Comparée" has proved a valuable post of dignity to another, and after the Restoration was appointed professor à la Faculté de Droit. In 1837 he was raised to the peerage, and in 1842 he died.

\* This was a mémoire which he wrote for the "Class des Sciences Morales et Politiques," and which received the prize, an honor of which he received the intelligence as he was reposeing from the toils and dangers of the battle of Zurich. It consists of 4 vols. 8vo.



able auxiliary to eclecticism. In presenting a faithful picture of the principal schools of philosophy which have severally played their part in the world, it has broken down a blind attachment to any one peculiar system, and demonstrated the fact, that truth exists, more or less, amongst them all. In a word, M. Degérando, by introducing his readers so fully into the interior of the great philosophies of ancient and more modern times, has induced many a one to become an eclectic, even in spite of himself; so that we must regard his elaborate volumes as no inconsiderable link in the chain of causes, by which the elevation of the eclectic philosophy to so high a position as it now assumes has been effected.

II. We must notice the contributions which have been brought, by *physiological* researches, to the progress of eclecticism in France. Physiology, during the earlier years of this century, was considered to be all on the side of materialism. The views of Cabanis (which we have explained in a former chapter) reigned, for a time, almost supreme among metaphysicians, on the one hand, and the members of the medical faculty, on the other. In proportion, however, as the spirit of philosophy gradually altered, and the reaction began to manifest itself against sensationalism, in the same proportion we find a corresponding influence exerted upon the speculations of the physiologist, forcing upon his attention facts which, hitherto, had been either mis-explained, or altogether explained away.

In the year 1823, M. Bérard, of Montpellier, published his "*Doctrine des Rapports du Physique et du Moral*," in which he repelled the materialism of those who had preceded him in his investigation, and showed, upon purely scientific principles, that we *must* admit something beyond the brain and the nerves, to account for the simplest facts of human nature. The position in which he intrenches himself is this; that matter, being dead, motionless, inert, could never give rise to any changes whatever, were there not something besides matter to produce them. We may say, popularly, that certain particles of matter, when brought into contact, give rise to *motion*; but, evidently, it is not the *mere proximity* of them, which could produce such an effect. Proximity is, in fact, only the condition upon which a certain *force* is put into action; and this force is the real *cause* of the whole phenomenon. Wherever there is change or motion, therefore, we must necessarily admit the existence of *power*, and power cannot possibly be con-

ceived of under the idea of atoms, molecules, or of any material type or emblem.

With regard to the real nature of power, this, of course, must vary with the effects produced. When food is assimilated in the human stomach, here we have in operation a digestive power, of a chemical nature: when life is produced and maintained, we see the exertion of a certain vital power; so, also, when we observe intelligence manifesting itself, we conclude the existence of an intellectual power or principle, which we term mind. In short, all *causes*, according to M. Bérard, are immaterial, or spiritual; and *mind* is the name we give to that peculiar power or cause, by which intelligence and emotion are called forth. To sum up his doctrine in his own words—"The mind is *one*—indivisible, immaterial, though united to the body; it cannot lend itself to this union, except *as mind*, and not according to the law which unites body to body. It cannot be placed by the side, or in the midst of the organs; but it is present in them—it perceives in them—it gives activity to them, and receives it from them. It is bound in its exercise, by certain physiological and vital conditions, without which it would not be able to display its faculties; but it does not owe these faculties to them; it is a force, in harmony and co-operation with other forces, which all have, in organization, their functions and their attributes."\*

Another author, who has conducted the physiological argument against materialism with great ability, is M. Virey, whose volume on the "Vital Power" appeared in the year 1823. According to the theory there maintained, there is a life-power sent forth from God, the great first cause, which is the basis of all the changes that take place in the material universe, and all the phenomena of animated existence. This power we see first giving its crystalline form to the mineral; then entering into all the varied genera and species of the vegetable world; and lastly, achieving its greatest wonders in animal life, and in man as its highest form. This same vital power it is, which, pervading the whole of nature, binds all existence together in the most perfect harmony. Nothing stands isolated and alone; and even man himself, though raised above the rest of creation around, yet is a link in the chain of universal being, having relation both to the life below and the life beyond him. Far as we should be from giving in our entire adherence to a sys-

\* On the doctrines of M. Bérard, see Damiron's "Essai sur l'Histoire de Phil." vol. ii. p. 12, *et seq.*; also a brief notice in the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Phil."

tem of nature founded upon the principle just stated, yet we must regard the work of M. Virey as having been in its time highly valuable. The arguments, the assumptions, and the miserable shifts of materialism, were there shown forth in the most plain and palpable manner; the ingenious devices by which Cabanis attempted to overcome the difficulties of his adopted theory, were displayed and refuted; and the necessity was strongly demonstrated of admitting some power or other beyond the mere concurrence of atoms, in order to explain the facts both of life and of intelligence. In a word, M. Virey had succeeded in strongly impressing upon his own mind the notion of *power* as the basis of all spiritualism; and he felt (as every mind must feel in which this notion has been fully developed) that it is far less possible to banish the existence of some all-pervading and ever energetic power of the universe, than it is to banish the notion of matter itself. Putting the three possible hypotheses of the universe side by side—that which regards it as entirely composed of material atoms, that which regards it as consisting altogether of forces, and that which regards it as a combination of the two, we have no hesitation in saying, that the first is that which we can give up with the least violation of all the fundamental principles of human knowledge.

In a country like France, where materialism had intrenched itself within the conclusions of physiology, it was assuredly no small aid to the progress of eclecticism to find writers like those above mentioned (and other names, perhaps, equally eminent might be added) who were ready to meet the materialist on his own ground, and to dislodge him from his strongest positions.

III. While France, at the beginning of the century, was devoted to the sensational hypothesis, the neighboring soil of Germany was cherishing a most profound idealism. We may next mention, therefore, one or two French authors, who, from residence in Germany, imbibed the foreign philosophy, and who sought to extend the knowledge of it to their own country. The name of Villers is well known in this country, as the French expositor of Kant's "Critick of Pure Reason." Passing by those, however, who have merely distinguished themselves by expounding the views of others, we may mention one or two writers who have followed a more independent course in advocating their philosophical opinions.

First, we shall refer to the Baron Massias, some time Consul-Général at Hamburg, and afterwards Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin. In this author we recognize a mind which, during a long course of

years, has devoted itself with persevering and untiring energy to the study of philosophy. As a writer, he may not appear so attractive as many others, his style aiming rather at expressing his own thoughts, and embodying his own individuality, than adapting itself to the public mind; but it is impossible not to remark in it a great integrity of purpose, and an unbiassed love of truth. His chief work is an elaborate production of five volumes, entitled "*Rapports de l'Homme à la Nature, et de la Nature à l'Homme,*" in which he discusses a vast number of questions, touching upon almost all branches of philosophy.

The Baron explains the whole phenomena of humanity under the three facts of instinct, intelligence and life. Instinct is the foundation of our very existence—that which guides and preserves our life in all its primitive and most essential functions. Intelligence is that which peculiarly distinguishes man as a moral agent; and, lastly, life, as developed in humanity, is that which results from the harmonious combination both of instinct and of intelligence. Without instinct, man would not live at all; without intelligence, he would not live morally; under the influence of both together, he lives for the accomplishment of the great end of his being. In a similar strain our author discourses on the world, and on God, its first cause. "He regards the whole creation," says M. Damiron, "as a great drama. The mysterious and divine poet who has conceived it, and put it into play, shows himself to no one; he is not here rather than there; he was not yesterday more than to-day; but everywhere and always he makes himself felt. He does not unveil, and yet he proves himself; and, without developing himself intimately, he makes himself known by signs and reveals himself in symbols. This, he considers, if not enough for our curiosity, ought to be enough for our reason."

In 1830, M. Massias published another work, entitled "*Traité de Philosophie Psycho-Physiologique,*" in which he has developed the same views as those which are scattered throughout his larger work, with a more particular reference to the physiology of the mind. In addition to this, he has published two controversial pamphlets in opposition to M. Broussais, in which he defends his opinions with much warmth and vigor against the materialism maintained by that author. In fine, though we cannot term M. Massias a professed adherent of eclecticism, yet in many points he coincides fully with their opinions, and has ever been a zealous co-



operator with them in subverting the principles of the sensational school.

Another French author who comes still nearer to the spirit of eclecticism, is M. Ancillon, formerly French Protestant preacher at Berlin, afterwards professor of philosophy at the Military Academy there, and finally minister of foreign affairs to the King of Prussia. M. Ancillon commenced his authorship, in the department of literature and philosophy, so far back as the year 1801;\* and appeared before the public from time to time almost to the period of his death, which took place in 1837. His three principal publications consist of essays and miscellanies, comprising many subjects connected with metaphysics, politics, and general literature. The last work he wrote was an essay upon "Science and Philosophical Faith," in which he takes a review of the conflicting opinions of Germany, and points out in what respect the principal philosophers of that country have erred, from taking an imperfect view of the fundamental principles of human knowledge. His own opinions approach most nearly to those of the school of Jacobi, owing to the great stress he lays upon intuitive knowledge, or, as he terms it, *philosophical faith*. He regards science, indeed, as nothing more than *faith* developed by reflection, and includes within the circle of this instinctive belief many truths of a purely spiritual nature. Though not an eclectic, in the sense in which that term is applied to the modern spiritualists of France, yet M. Ancillon has displayed the spirit of eclecticism even more fully, perhaps, than some of its professed advocates. Throughout the whole of his career he has been a mediator between extremes, whether in literature, politics, or philosophy; and one of his works, indeed, (written originally in the German language,) was published with this precise object in view. Although it is the opinion of many, that M. Ancillon is far from profound in the strictures he has made on the German philosophy, and the expositions he has offered of its principal doctrines, yet we should hardly suppose that there can be any other author (M. Cousin excepted) to whom the French public owe so many valuable thoughts from the German literature and philosophy, or any other who has had so direct an influence in rendering the principles of a calm and spiritual philosophy familiar to their minds.

\* His "Mélanges de Littérature et de Philosophie" were published at Berlin in 1801; and a second edition in Paris, in 1809. The "Essais Philosophiques, ou Nouveaux Mélanges," appeared in 1817; and the "Nouveaux Essais" in 1824. Some years later he published a work, entitled "Médiateur des Extrêmes en Politique et en Littérature;" and in 1830, appeared his last labor, "Sur la Science et la Foi."

IV. In rendering an account of the various influences that have borne upon the modern philosophy of France, we must not overlook those which have emanated from Switzerland. From its geographical situation, and, as it regards most of its inhabitants, from a community of language, Switzerland has necessarily stood in close relationship with Germany. On the other hand, that portion of the country which uses the French language, and of which we may regard Geneva as virtually the centre, has been almost as closely united to Scotland, both by religious sympathies and historical recollections. As a proof of this, be it remembered that the philosophy of Reid and Stewart found there its first asylum on the Continent of Europe. Amidst all the predominant French influence, therefore, which Switzerland experienced at the time of the Revolution, there was ever mingled an under-current of opposing thoughts and feelings, arising from the Scottish philosophy on the one hand, and the German idealism on the other. Notwithstanding the strong sensational tendency manifested by Bonnet (one of the first metaphysicians of Switzerland during the last century), we find in such writers as M. Prévost, and even in those who were pupils of Bonnet himself, an extreme readiness to throw off the fetters of the sensational system in which they were educated, and to adopt the more profound and spiritual conclusions of the Scottish writers. The only author to which we shall now make any distinct reference is M. Bonstetten, in whose works the critical reader will not fail to trace the combined influence of Condillac, of Kant, and of Reid. His works consist of two volumes, entitled "*Recherches sur l'Imagination*," published in 1807; and two others, entitled "*Études de l'Homme*," published in the year 1821; in both of which there is manifested the same earnest philosophical spirit, which is so well calculated at once to please and instruct the reader. The chief aim of his writings is to analyze the intellectual and active powers, to show the proper sphere in which each of them operates and the ideas to which they give rise. Perhaps he most nearly resembles a pupil of the school of Reid and Stewart, exhibiting much of the same shrewd psychological observation, the same moderation in his aims and purposes, and the same good sense generally, which have ever characterized the Scottish metaphysicians.

The influence of his works upon France must have been decidedly in favor of eclecticism. Firmly attached to spiritualism on the one hand, and ever ready to borrow light from whatever source

on the other, he clearly sympathized in the main principles for which the eclectic philosophers of that country have struggled; and to him, accordingly, they have appealed, as affording an unbiassed testimony in favor of their own opinions. M. Bonstetten died in the year 1831, having completed eighty-six years, during the greater part of which he had lived faithful in his devotion to the cause of philosophical truth.

V. After having noticed the above extraneous sources, from which the eclectic philosophy has received aid and encouragement, we must now conclude by pointing out one or two philosophical writers, purely and exclusively French, who, without strictly adhering to eclecticism, have shown their sympathy with the anti-sensational movement of the present day. Among these we should place M. Thurot, who was carried off in the prime of life by the fearful epidemic with which the French capital was so severely visited, in the year 1832. This learned and elegant author had published, shortly before his death, a work, in two volumes, entitled "*De l'Entendement et de la Raison.*" By the understanding he means the intellectual faculty generally; by the reason he signifies merely the proper use and employment of our faculties. The general character of the work is almost entirely psychological. It treats, first, of knowledge as derived from perception; then, of knowledge in relation to language; thirdly, of the power of the will; and, lastly, of the moral faculty. The author does not enter, to any extent, into the deeper questions of ontology, nor does he discuss at any length the spirituality of the mind. It is evident, however, that his own views are decidedly opposed to materialism; and were we called upon to class him under any school, we should say, as we did of M. Bonstetten, that in his habits of psychological observation, and the general tone of his philosophical writings, he might best pass as a follower of the Scottish school of intellectual philosophy. M. Thurot was a friend and disciple of M. Laromiguière, and we may reckon him, therefore, as belonging to the eclectic school in that particular stage of its progress.

Another philosophical writer of the same class is M. Cardaillac, author of a work entitled "*Études élémentaires de Philosophie.*" In this work we see simply a somewhat further development of the philosophy of M. Laromiguière, in which the principal defects of that author are supplied, and some of his cruder views matured. Like M. Thurot, he is clearly opposed to sensationalism, and may be re-



garded as no mean coadjutor, though not a decided adherent of modern eclecticism.

Among the most prominent and most voluminous writers of France, at the present time, stands M. Lerminier, professor of philosophy at the College of France. A succession of works upon the philosophy of jurisprudence, and upon the history of metaphysical systems in different countries, written with great brilliancy of style and vigor of mind, have achieved for him a reputation, which, if it may not prove to be perennial, yet at least sheds some glory around his name as an author and a philosopher. M. Lerminier has united himself to no school, and perhaps his opinions are not very clearly defined. Of sensational principles, however, he has ever shown himself a stern opponent; and although he has far more sympathy with the spirit of eclecticism as now developed in France, yet he has thrown out even against *it* some bold and vigorous objections. His aim appears to be to hold up the necessity of founding a native philosophy in France; which, though grounded upon the nature and authority of the human mind, shall contemplate it in its historical development, as achieving for itself new conquests in the departments of art, of science, of politics, of social institutions, and of religion. In brief, M. Lerminier having well mastered the main principles of the German philosophy, and being evidently impressed with the validity of many of its researches, would unite with its results the idea of progress, as proclaimed by the historical school of France, and thus combine the deep metaphysics of the one with the traditional and progressive light of the other.\*

We have thus briefly passed under review a number of metaphysical writers, (to which several more might have been added,) who, though not professing eclecticism, yet have taken their part in the reformation of the French philosophy. Our chief object in doing so has been, not so much to make our readers acquainted with their particular views, (which could not be satisfactorily done in a mere manual,) as to show that the reaction in France against the materialistic school of the last century, has been more general and more decided than is frequently imagined. All this multiplicity of antagonism, which the bold assumption of the sensational writers

\* The principal works of M. Lerminier are a "Philosophie du Droit," 2 vols. 8vo, Par. 1831; "Etudes d'Histoire de Philosophie," Par. 1836; "Cours d'Histoire des Législations comparée," Par. 1837; together with some minor works principally on the German philosophy, of which the most interesting, as far as I have read them, is that entitled "Au delà du Rhin."



called forth, has, in fact, only tended to encourage and develop the spirit of eclecticism, in its more recent and energetic form.

We venture to predict, that there is no school of philosophy that has arisen since the revival of literature in Europe, which is likely to leave broader traces behind it, and play a more important part in the development of the human mind, than is that to which this chapter has been devoted. In point of originality, it must doubtless yield the palm to the idealism of Germany; but as in other branches of learning, so also in philosophy, Germany seems destined to afford the *material*, which the more skilful and adroit minds of England and France are to employ for the enlightenment and advancement of the great mass of humanity. Modern eclecticism, though but of a few years' growth, has already begun to put forth its vigor in many parts of the world. In addition to its having succeeded in arousing France from the torpor of its extreme materialism—in addition to its having reinfused into that great people a fresh taste for spiritual, and even religious ideas—it has crossed the Atlantic, and founded, in America, a colony which bids fair to embrace and direct all the metaphysical tendencies of the New World. England, moreover, is now beginning to appreciate the labors of modern eclecticism; and if we are destined, ere long, to awake from the slumber, with which, as far as philosophy is concerned, we have now, for many years past, been oppressed, we must look to the spiritual movement of France as the chief source from which our new life is to be derived. Already can we trace its influence upon some of the most popular and most metaphysical of our writers; and we trust that, ere long, we may see the elements of a new school of philosophy on this side the Channel, which may emulate France in those points which are most worthy our imitation.

In estimating the merits of the eclectic school, care should be taken not to confound it with that paltry attempt at philosophizing, which, for want of any decided views whatever, puts together a misshapen and incoherent mass of other men's opinions. Eclecticism, as now advocated and understood, takes in a range of investigation, wide as philosophy itself. Philosophy has a history in the world, as well as humanity; and the true eclectic simply aims at studying it in its historical development. He regards the human reason as a germ, which has been ever unfolding, and is destined yet to unfold, so long as the purposes of providence respecting mankind go on to accomplish themselves upon the stage of human

life. It is true, that we find the same great questions produced and reproduced, the same systems sinking and rising again, the same problems ever solving, and yet to be solved. Still, with all this, there has been a gradual progress in the development of truth in the world ; so that, instead of rejecting all the labors of those great minds which have preceded us in the domains of philosophy, and beginning to build a new edifice for each succeeding generation, it does appear to us both right and necessary to stand upon the elevation already attained, and to strive to add our portion, small as it may be, to the erection of the edifice of philosophical truth. This is the spirit of eclecticism—a philosophy which, under the influence of meagre erudition, may, it is true, easily dwindle down to absolute insignificance ; but which, under the guidance of sound learning and intellectual power, promises the richest harvest to the patient and vigorous laborer.\*

• *Vid.* Appendix, Note H.

## PART III.

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### CHAPTER IX.

#### ON THE TENDENCIES OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

WE have now completed the primary object we had in view; namely, to portray the broader *characteristics* which the speculative philosophy of the nineteenth century has already assumed. Before we close the subject, however, and bring our labor to its termination, we have thought it might add somewhat to the completeness of the sketch, were we to occupy a few pages in elucidating the *tendencies* of the different systems which have been discussed.

By the tendencies of a metaphysical system, we mean the whole mass of ultimate consequences, which can be fairly and logically drawn from its acknowledged principles. These consequences, it must be remembered, are not always seen in the simple doctrines it maintains, or in the objects which it professes to aim at; very frequently, we find it giving rise to sentiments, which were supposed altogether foreign from its original principles, and accomplishing ends, at first by no means contemplated. Philosophical ideas are mighty and pregnant germs, which may expand almost to infinity; and often, it is no more possible to say, at once, what lies potentially in a given principle, than it would be to predict, from the appearance of some strange root or seed, of what kind is the plant which it will eventually produce.

In order, then, to understand what the tendencies of any system of philosophy really are, there are two methods which may be employed for the purpose; the one is the method of deduction, the other, of observation—the former being an *a priori*, the latter an *a posteriori* process. In employing the *deductive* method, our aim

is to unfold the consequences which lie hidden in any given principles, by *logical reasoning*. This is, in fact, what almost all speculative philosophy aims at. The germs of all abstract truth exist, virtually, in every rational mind, only in a crude and undeveloped state; and it is for philosophy to make us reflectively conscious of what these germs really contain. The whole history of philosophy, indeed, is but the history of the successive attempts which have been made to decipher the characters engraven by Deity upon the tablet of the human soul. To comprehend, therefore, the tendencies of any principles *a priori*, we must reason or philosophize upon them, until the thought they contain is expanded and realized. In employing, on the other hand, the *a posteriori* method, all we have to do, is to note down the effects, which history or personal observation show to have actually arisen from the principles in question. This experimental process is often necessary, to confirm or verify the conclusions of our *a priori* reasoning; and it is when both methods are employed in conjunction, that the clearest and fullest results are obtained.

But there is another thought, on which we must lay some stress, in connection with the tendencies of philosophy; namely, that to estimate the effects of abstract principles aright, we must not confine our view simply to the *metaphysical* theories they involve. Metaphysical ideas exert a vast influence out of the region of philosophy itself; and it is in these, their indirect and collateral bearings, that their true tendencies are most readily observed. The precise object, then, which we have before us in the present chapter, is to look at the four generic systems, whose characteristics we have already portrayed, in connection with some of those other spheres of human thought and activity, upon which their influence is most observable. This, it will be seen, has an important bearing upon the future. If, by logical reasoning, aided by past experience, we are able to unfold the natural effects of these different schools of philosophy, upon questions of great practical moment, in society at large, we have, in fact, the key by which to interpret at once their present tendencies, and their future influence upon the coming history of mankind.

The next point to be considered is,—What spheres of human thought and activity might be best adduced, as exemplifying the tendencies of philosophical systems? Here, of course, a wide field of observation opens itself before us. Literature, art, government, history—almost every branch of human research, might be regard-



ed, one after the other, as modelled upon the type of certain fundamental conceptions, and varying, just in proportion as those conceptions vary. In order, however, to bring our remarks within a closer compass, we shall select for illustration *three* of the provinces of man's mental activity, in which the working of philosophical ideas is more direct and apparent; and these are the respective provinces of Science, Legislation, and Religion.

First, then, we say, that the tendency of abstract philosophy may be seen, by its effect upon the progress of *scientific investigation*. Nothing can be more erroneous than the supposition, that the pursuit of physical science lies entirely without the range of abstract thinking, or that it consists wholly in the collection and classification of facts. Facts *alone* can never create science. They may furnish, it is true, the data on which it rests; but science, properly so called, only results, when these facts are consciously grounded in some conception, and tend to educe some general principle. The facts of mathematical science, for example, rest ultimately upon the pure conceptions, either of number or space; those of natural philosophy, upon the idea of causality; those of physiology, upon the notion of life; and so, in every instance, there is some *thought*, from which each particular branch of investigation springs, as well as some general law or principle, at which it aims. For science, then, to advance, it is just as necessary that these abstract conceptions should be made clear and distinct, as that facts should be collected; and while the latter process requires the constant aid of observation and experiment, the former can only be finally accomplished by a well cultivated and philosophical habit of *thinking*. Science is as much indebted to those who have expounded its nature, its conceptions, and its method, as to those who have collected its actual data. It was Bacon's metaphysical genius, for example, which turned the stream of physical investigation into the right channel; which laid open the true method, by which it should be conducted; and which enabled mankind to recover, in three centuries, the loss of labor they had sustained during two thousand years previous. Generally, then, we may say, that in proportion as philosophy has succeeded in clearing our conceptions, the facts of observation become so much the more available for the construction of science.

Again,—the tendency of philosophical systems is seen in their influence upon the principles of *legislation*. Society is humanity in its natural combination; and according to our estimate of what

the fundamental laws, wants, and characteristics generally of human nature are, will be the principles of government, which are seen to be adapted to it. The statesman, who legislates for man as nothing more than a superior animal, will follow a very different course in the application of his authority, from one who feels, that our humanity is Divine, and can only thrive under the shadow of eternal justice, rectitude, and truth. The sensational moralist, as a legislator, will seek to satisfy our corporal desires and appetites at whatever cost; the spiritual moralist, as a legislator, will seek first to respect and to nurture the freedom, the justice, the moral dignity, from which all true rational greatness must spring.

Thirdly,—it is hardly necessary to make any preliminary remarks upon the manner in which philosophical ideas influence our *theological creed* and our *religious practice*. If it be true that the foundation of theology is found in the laws of our reason, and the witness they bear to the being of a God; if it be true, that the germ of the religious *life* is cradled in the affections of our nature; if it be true, that the human intellect must decide upon the authenticity of a Divine revelation, and interpret the documents by which it is conveyed to us;—then it becomes evident, that the conclusions of philosophy upon the validity of reason and the nature of the affections, must intimately affect the whole region of theology itself. With these few preliminary observations, then, we shall proceed at once to the particular object of the present chapter, namely, to point out, as far as we may be able, the respective tendencies of the different systems of philosophy which prevail in this our nineteenth century.

#### SECT. I.—*On the Tendencies of Modern Sensationalism.*

The first or lowest step of sensationalism is that which teaches us to attach an undue importance to the intimations of the senses: the extreme development of it is, to symbolize everything with the material; to make the soul synonymous with the brain, and God but the abstraction of nature. Between these two points there is an infinite number of positions, which can be held by minds of a sensational tendency; and an infinite number of applications of the views thus maintained.

A. According, then, to our proposed plan, we shall first notice the tendency of sensationalism within the domain of physical sci-

ence. Now, physical science, being an expansion of the fundamental idea of *nature*, is one of the most necessary products of a sensational age. Physics, however, are not always regarded in one and the same point of view, either in respect to their nature or their objects: they have always had their deeper and more recondite, as well as their more superficial movement. While, on the one hand, they may simply include the most commonplace observation of facts, yet they may reach, on the other hand, the highest degree of scientific abstraction. Starting with a simple classification of palpable phenomena, they may acquire progressively more and more generality; until, from being a science of simple observation, they become at length, to a great extent, one of purely rational deduction. The known laws of the heavenly bodies were first included in the scanty observations of the Chaldæan shepherd; now they are reduced to the abstract doctrine of forces; this doctrine itself, too, reposing upon the still more abstract and recondite conceptions of *power* and *motion*.

Hence, we may observe the difference that will manifest itself between the science of an objective and that of a subjective age. The former will strive to create an empirical picture of the universe; it will add fact to fact, and phenomenon to phenomenon, until the whole machinery of nature, which is open to the outward observer, shall have been described. The latter, on the contrary, will be ever searching either into the *forces* by which the world is governed, endeavoring to generalize them to their highest degree, and seeking to reduce them to their most abstract form; or, into the *ends*, towards which all the phenomena of nature are ever pointing. The one will investigate chiefly the matter of our knowledge, the other will investigate the form; the one will collect the facts, the other will explain the conceptions in which those facts are grounded; the one will inquire little after the First Cause, as lying beyond the range of sensible observation; the other will attempt to conceive how all creation has flowed forth from the prime creating mind; the one will look upon all things simply as *facts*, the other will view them in relation to their eternal *purposes*.

Now, although the rash spirit of the French Encyclopædist has happily disappeared, yet various indications still exist, in different parts of Europe, of such a sensational tendency in the investigations of physical science. Some of these indications are observable in the department of general physics, others more especially



in that of physiology. To distinguish these tendencies of modern sensationalism from each other, we may call the former its *cosmological*, the latter its *physiological* tendencies.

First, then, sensationalism in its cosmological tendencies always evinces a disposition more or less decisive to erect the idea of nature over that of God ; that is, to merge the notion of a final cause in the totality of secondary causes around us. So it is in the present day. France, England, Germany, all three rivals to each other in the discoveries of science, have each given recent manifestations of the still powerful influence of empiricism within the domain of natural philosophy. France, as might have been supposed, has led the way. Not many years have elapsed since M. Comte poured forth his startling doctrines upon the world, and attempted to persuade mankind that this glorious universe which we exhibit, has come into being by the spontaneous working of mechanical laws.

In our own country, and far more recently, the scientific world has been thrown into commotion by the anonymous appearance of the "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation." In this work, we have a very plausible, though a very imperfectly sustained effort of empiricism, to explain the process of creation. God is here placed at some immeasurable distance from the universe, while *it* is left to proceed onwards in its process of self-development, and to bring all its multifarious phenomena into being, by virtue of certain laws originally impressed upon it. The theory, stripped of all its adornments, is this :—That it is possible, one vast universe of nebula being granted, to trace the whole method by which it has assumed its present form, with all its endless diversities, *through the medium of the physical laws now seen to be in operation*. It is true, that the *a posteriori* argument for the being of God is not materially affected by this system, supposing it to be true, because *law* must have a creator and a designer, as well as the most fully developed existences : but the general impression of the theory is one which leads us to exclude Deity from any *immediate* connection with, or interest in, the universe he has made.

Such an effect, however, we are far from thinking rationally deduced, even on the supposition that the physical processes and laws, which the author attempts to make out, were fairly established. *Laws*, after all, are merely abstractions ; the *power* itself which works in them is still Divine ; so that, should the process, by which everything comes into being, be at length explained, the



proper influence, so far from excluding Deity, would be only to make us more than ever cognizant of the immediate workings of the Divine hand around us. The whole theory has emanated, as it appears to us, from a mind in which the idea of *nature* has obtained the great predominance over our other fundamental conceptions, in which the *power of intelligent mind* is sunk in the vague notion of law; and in which, as a natural consequence, Providence (that is, the presence of the mind of God in the world) is reduced almost, if not altogether, to a nonentity. Those who would further investigate the conclusions of this remarkable work, conclusions so plausibly supported and so eloquently drawn, should not forbear to read the article in the "Edinburgh Review," in which the scientific accuracy of the unknown author is probed with the hand of a master, and his theory estimated with great acuteness.

Since the publication, we may remark, of several works of a somewhat similar tendency, (of which "Combe's Constitution of Man" may be taken as a fair specimen,) it has become by no means uncommon with many besides the author of the "Vestiges," to push aside the doctrine of Providence as a thing altogether exploded. Now we are quite ready to admit that the common idea of Providence has had many absurdities clinging around it, and that such works as the above have brought many truths respecting the influence of the natural laws to light, which had been too much overlooked. But here unfortunately we find, as in most other instances, that a principle, when once applied with success, is apt to be generalized altogether beyond its legitimate extent; and that a true idea, once too eagerly grasped, is sure to be worked threadbare before it is fairly dismissed. The fact that God operates by the medium of natural laws, does not, in the least, *exclude* the idea of providential interposition or superintendence. What are the natural laws after all? They are not real existences. They merely express *modes of the Divine operation*, which we are able to trace in the world around us. That God operates in these modes does not imply that he operates in no other; nor does the fact that an event takes place by some secondary agency, exclude it from a specific participation in the Divine plan *as a whole*.

Let us assume a case for example. Suppose a man, by some act of imprudence, to contract a disease, and hasten on his death. One says, in contemplating the scene, it is a dispensation of Providence. Not at all, says another, it is the natural effect of the laws which he foolishly violated. We rejoin, however, *that it is both*.

The man broke the law, and paid the penalty ; but every thought, every purpose, every action, every circumstance, in a word, which influenced that man's life, and led him at length into the fatal resolution under which he fell, has depended upon a succession of agencies reaching back even to his infancy ; and these agencies, be it remembered, all belong to the region of God's moral government. We do not say that they are fixed by a stern necessity, since that would destroy the notion of human liberty, but they are all under the *moral control* of Deity from first to last, so that the penalty which seems at first to be simply the result of breaking a natural law, is really an effect of that providential power which governs the world. Human things may *appear* to the unthinking to be absolutely controlled by the fixed laws of our being ; but if we look beneath the surface, we see the hand of God moving all the springs, and making every event, even those arising from our free agency itself, contribute to the development of his purposes.

How marvellous an exemplification does history give us of the manner in which human agency is blended with Divine Providence ! The sum and substance of the world's history is but the aggregate of the voluntary actions of mankind upon the stage of human life. Whilst, however, this is the case, yet God himself has composed the drama ; it is he that framed the law of human progress ; he that orings about its accomplishment by actions which to us, indeed, are voluntary, but which, notwithstanding, form a part of his own great plan from all eternity. To the man who looks unbelievingly upon Divine Providence, the world's history is a problem that can never be solved.

It is not only in France and England, however, that we find the influence of sensationalism within the department of natural philosophy. Germany, too, which has recently been making great progress in physical research, has just given rise to a work of extraordinary popularity, which stands forth in bold contrast to the rationalistic systems for which that country has been famed ; I mean the "Cosmos" of the Baron von Humboldt. Little more, perhaps, could be observed with justice respecting the sensational tendency of this work, than the total rejection which the author indicates of all attempts to form an *a priori* explanation of the laws of the universe, and the purely objective course which he follows in all his own researches. We see throughout the whole the traces of a mind in which the observing powers are wonderfully active, while the eye by which we were designed to gaze upon the super-

sensual and spiritual world has, comparatively speaking, grown dim. The value of the facts which are brought forward by the baron is, of course, not at all affected by this objective manner of viewing them; the only thing to be wished were that the learned author had gained some idea of assigning their ends, and of tracing them up to their Divine and spiritual source. On this point, however, his language is anything but satisfactory. "In submitting," he remarks, "physical phenomena and historical events to the exercise of the reflective faculty, and in ascending, by reasoning, to their causes, we become more and more penetrated by that ancient belief, that the forces inherent in matter and those regulating the moral world exert their action under the presence of a *primordial necessity*, and according to movements periodically renewed at longer or shorter intervals." And, again, he says, "True to the character of my earlier writings, and to the nature of my occupations, I confine myself strictly to empirical considerations. This is the only ground upon which I feel myself competent to move without sense of insecurity." And so this is the end of a long life's search into the wonders and glories of nature—either to hover in doubt and insecurity around the idea of a primordial necessity, or to entertain that of a godless universe. Thus it is, while the spiritual eye and the higher reason can see God all around, the sensational theorist, forever immersed in the "dark windings of the material and the earthy," gradually loses all perception of the infinite and the Divine. Here, as everywhere, the error of sensationalism in the department of natural philosophy is one of defect; the observer is impelled onwards to an unlimited extent in the collection of data, but he stops short in his investigation ere he has attempted to trace them to their first cause, or to realize the manner in which the material is all cradled and embosomed in the spiritual.

So far, then, we notice the present aspect of sensationalism in its cosmological tendency; we now add a few words respecting its physiological tendency. Here, as in the last case, the gross materialism of the French sensational school is at present comparatively seldom met with. Few will at present attempt to argue, like Cabanis, that all intelligence consists in sensation, and that all sensation resides in the nerves; the bolder assumptions of this system consequently have been fairly controverted and overthrown. Whilst, however, the system as a whole has been refuted, yet the same doctrine under another form virtually lives on, in that peculiar school of cerebral physiology, which has adopted



extreme phrenological principles. In this view of the case, materialism has far greater plausibility. The theory of Cabanis was not built upon any true idea. It was an enormous error to assert, that all intelligence is but a form of sensation ; and not less so, to suppose that sensation resides in the nerves ; but the materialism of the ultra-phrenologists is grounded upon a true idea, namely, that cerebral development is inseparably connected (as we are now constituted) with mental manifestation. Let the notion of efficient causes be rejected ; let simple antecedence and consequence be regarded as the whole process of causation ; and from the phrenological hypothesis materialism necessarily results. The argument lies in a small compass. Here is the antecedent on the one hand, namely, cerebral excitement ; here is the consequent on the other, mental manifestation. What need have we of any link between them, termed mind or spirit ? The whole process is complete without it. The reply to this is a simple one, namely, that all causation implies power or force ; that power, wherever exerted or through whatever medium, is an immaterial thing ; much more so, that wondrous power of which we are hourly conscious, and which we term mind. The due analysis of the idea we have under the one term *power*, cuts at the root of all materialism, of whatever nature or complexion it may be. We lay the more stress upon making this analysis aright, and firmly grasping the idea resulting from it, because the present tendency of sensationalism, in the hands of the phrenologist, is fast bearing us back to the materialism we had disowned, and can only be stayed by upholding the infinite distinction between the organ or law of any operation on the one hand, and the *power* which produces it on the other.

Before we conclude these remarks upon the influence of sensationalism within the department of physics, we must add a word or two respecting its influence upon the *method of scientific investigation*. It is here that the assistance of philosophy is more immediately felt, and more imperatively demanded. Vigorous efforts have been put forth from time to time in our own day, to reduce the laws of induction to a system of definite rules, and base them upon philosophical principles ; and these efforts in every case have been modified by the metaphysical views which the author of them has adopted. The two great writers on the logic of induction, which our age can boast as peculiarly its own, are Professor Whewell and Mr. Mill, whose works, when put side by side with each



other, present a very instructive instance of the manner in which the fundamental principles of philosophy can bear upon the method of scientific research. The former, as we have already seen, is decidedly of an anti-sensational tendency ; and the effect of this is seen in the whole theory he has propounded respecting the construction of science.\* The latter must be reckoned as belonging to the sensationalist school. Yet so different in his sensationalism from what we have seen in the French materialist, that we may almost regard him as a proof of the reaction which has set in against their extreme empirical principles. The stress which is laid upon the deductive method, the close, and often admirable analyses which are given of many of our fundamental conceptions, and the whole tone of philosophical thinking by which his "Logic" is characterized, manifest a very different spirit from that of the shallow empiricism of the preceding age. We believe that the *method* of science in the hands of such analysts is not destined to continue slavishly conformed to the Baconian model, but that it will become more and more deductive, in proportion as the data are enlarged upon which legitimate deduction can proceed.

*B.* We advance now to notice the tendencies of sensationalism, as seen in the department of legislation. Many of the philosophers, both of ancient and modern times, who have taken any comprehensive views of mental science, have applied their system to the investigation of the fundamental principles of jurisprudence. Several of our English philosophical writers, for example, from Hobbes downwards, have applied their principles to the elucidation of this subject ; and a still greater number, perhaps, of the French moralists, induced, probably, by the political aspect of their country, have attempted to philosophize upon the grounds of law, government, and social life. Germany, too, though so much more fixed in its political relations, and so much more given to transcendental researches, yet has not been behindhand in deducing theories of legislation from the different metaphysical systems it has originated. Thus, it is evident, that the various philosophical ideas, which have been in vogue, have had great influence upon the political principles of every age.

Now, if all human knowledge be reducible to the three fundamental ideas of self, nature, and God, it follows, that every theory of law and government must find its primary conception in one of these notions. On passing the different theories of government

\* See our remarks upon Whewell, in the section upon Modern English Idealism.

before our view, we find, accordingly, that they admit of a very easy classification, on this principle. Some jurists, for example, regard all law as proceeding from God; his is the right supreme, and He has delegated a divine right to whomsoever He will, to exercise power and authority in the world. Those, accordingly, to whom this right is granted, are the only proper dispensers of law to man—every human enactment being founded on the Divine will, expressed through them as its appointed organ. Another theory, or, we may say, class of theories, is built upon the indestructible facts and phenomena of the human mind. Man has the notion of *justice*; he sees in every fellow-man the possessor of certain inalienable rights; and upon these firm moral convictions of the human mind, the social fabric is to be erected. Again, a third hypothesis bases all human legislation upon mere expediency or utility; moral principle, as a separate ground of legal enactment, being discarded, and the outward happiness of the community being the sole guide, by which the legislator is to be directed in his course.

Of these three hypotheses, the last is evidently that which would result from a sensational philosophy; the two former would as naturally flow from an idealistic or a mystical system. Sensational ethics affirm, that a thing is right because it is expedient—the ethics of idealism maintain, that it is expedient because it is right. In this, we have presented to us the great question, which stands at the threshold of all morals and all legislation; and it is according as the one or other hypothesis is accepted, that the whole complexion of the succeeding system will be determined. Let us see how these conclusions are illustrated by the history of the present century.

No author, in modern times, has advocated the sensational theory of morals with so great warmth and vigor as Jeremy Bentham; it is in the political school of Bentham, therefore, that we are to look for the due influence of sensationalism, as applied to the department of legislation. And what is the doctrine which that school has maintained? It has maintained, that the sole basis of right is expediency; that the sole incentive to human action is self-interest; and that all law and all government must proceed upon the supposition, that men will be influenced exclusively by motives of personal advancement. This doctrine, indeed, we must admit, holds a somewhat strong position, from the fact of its embodying so large an amount of truth, to counterbalance its great

deficiency in principle. No one can deny that self-interest is a very fruitful motive to human action, and that the legislator must keep this in view, in all the details of his legislative arrangements. It was just to this point, therefore, that Bentham directed his chief attention; and few there are who would be unwilling to accord him his meed of praise, for the many abuses he exposed, and the many sound truths he inculcated. But with all this, we are far from thinking that Bentham rose to the full height of his argument, or rested his primary principles upon a right foundation. Legislation, when adapted simply to the outward circumstances of the community, and springing from the morals of self-interest, may, at first sight, appear very popular in its results; but, with all this, it is forgotten, that men are by far the most powerfully moved by educational, moral, and spiritual motives, and that, while immediate abuses can be kept off by an external policy, yet the true greatness, happiness, and stability of a country can only be secured by inculcating, by all possible methods, in all institutions, and upon all minds, *eternal justice and truth*. The principle of expediency, we allow, must not be, by any means, neglected, in legislating for the physical interests of the people; but expediency becomes a danger and a curse, the moment it fails to take its stand upon the laws of our moral nature, upon the principles of eternal rectitude, between man and man.

By far the most able advocate of Bentham's school of legislation, in this country, was Mr. James Mill; and as this acute writer has given us both an "Analysis of the Human Mind," and an "Essay on Government," we can, in his case, trace the influence of a sensational philosophy upon the theory of legislation, with much greater ease and distinctness. The whole theory is here seen to flow from the fundamental principle that all our mental phenomena arise from sensation, as their primary source. If this principle be true, then sensation is generically the same as desire; desire, moreover, is identical with the will. Consequently, all the phenomena of our moral being are but different cases, in which we seek the fulfilment of our desires; that is, in other words, the gratification of our sensitivity. With such a psychology, morals become necessarily of the selfish character; all motives to action must centre in our personal happiness; and legislation, consequently, must regard man as impelled by no other impulses or principles, in the whole course of his practical life.

The axiom, that men follow their interest, whenever they know



it, cannot, we contend, be sustained with any approach to plausibility. For what does interest mean? If it mean the general well-being, the greatest happiness of the greatest number, then we know that many will sacrifice this to their own private ends; or, if it mean the prominent desire which exists, at any given time, in the mind, then we know that many desire, and feel that they desire, what is not to their interest at all. In the whole of this theory of expediency, whether applied to ethics or legislation, there is an omission of the element of the *will*, the human personality, with all the moral principles originally impressed upon it. Once regard men as possessors of a moral nature, as impelled or restrained by the voice of conscience, as having the broad distinctions of right and wrong marked out in plain characters upon their very being, and inheriting a freedom of action, by which they can follow voluntarily the one course or the other; once regard them, in a word, as having a tribunal of justice within, and convinced of an eternal justice hereafter, and you see before you springs of action more potent than all self-interest, and elements of social life, which must lie at the basis of all true legislation. Sensationalism, wanting in these fundamental ideas and principles, has thrown out upon the public, from time to time, theories of government, as crude in their plan, as Utopian in their execution. Social systems in England, industrial theories on the Continent, and models of republics in both, have been held up for the admiration of the world; but all, as far as they regard man merely in his external relations, and consider him as the creature of outward circumstances, evince a radical deficiency, which nothing but sounder views of human nature can supply. If the actions of mankind are to be regulated, so as to conduce to the ultimate welfare of the community, then the foundation of all such regulations is to be found, not in a calculation of consequences, which, to our short-sightedness, must be infinitely imperfect, but in a clear comprehension of those moral laws, which God himself has formed, as the directories of human action, and the sources of the gradual perfection of human society.

C. It yet remains to notice the tendency of sensationalism, as exhibited in its bearing upon *theology*. As all human knowledge rests upon the three notions of nature, mind, and God, it follows, that an intelligence, in which these notions each occupy their due place, and keep up the exact balance which was intended to exist in our mental constitution, must be in the most natural and perfect state of development. Experience shows us, that if one of



these notions become too prominent, the other two must proportionally sink into the shade, until, perchance, their fading hues entirely vanish away.

Now, theology, in its broadest acceptation, is based upon two of these fundamental notions—those, namely, of *mind* and of *God*. Accordingly, if the idea of the material, or the visible, become all-predominant in the mind, just in the same proportion, (and that by a fixed law of our nature,) must the thoughts, on which theology is built, become dim, and the theology itself be shallow and incomplete. Hence it is, that the mind, whose attention is mainly directed to external things, experiences a want of intensity in all its religious conceptions, and though speculatively convinced of their truth, yet can never realize them with clearness and with power. On these principles, we can easily estimate the effect of a sensational philosophy upon man's perception of religious truth; for, just in proportion as the sensational element becomes more predominant, shall we find elevated and spiritual views, both of God and of man, dying away, until they become at length altogether unappreciated.

First, let us illustrate the truth of these conclusions, with respect to our *theistic* conceptions. The unobscured reason, in the present state of man's mental development, conceives of God, as an *infinite personality*; to it, the immensity of the Deity does not detract aught from his individuality, as the presiding *mind*, that directs the universe by unerring wisdom and benevolence. Nay, further; philosophy has not repudiated the existence of those diversities in the Divine unity, the reflection of which there is in man himself. The spiritual vision, even of some heathen minds, did not fail to see in the infinite being that blending of unity and plurality, which is the type of all perfection; and to the Christian idealist, the mystery of a Trinity has rarely proved a stone of stumbling, or a rock of offence. But no sooner does reason become "immersed in matter," than these conceptions of Deity grow strange and incredible—his personality, *as a mind*, becomes gradually sunk in the general notion of a great first cause, and his *specific* moral attributes, in the physical idea of his immensity and infinity.

Were we called upon to explain the progressive influence of sensationism upon man's theistic conceptions, we should do so somewhat in the following manner. The first effect is to weaken our perception of the Divine personality; this, in the second place,

makes itself apparent by overturning the doctrine of a particular providence ; next, in order to remove the Divine working further away from the world, secondary causes are adduced to explain, not only all the phenomena of nature, but also the direction of human life ; and then, lastly, the process advancing one step further, it begins to be an object of speculation and of doubt whether there be a distinct personality in the Deity or not ; until, at length, the conception of God is entirely blended with that of the order and unity of nature.

Again, equally decisive is the effect of sensationalism upon the views we have been taught to entertain of man as a creature of God. To the eye of sense a state of moral perfection is something altogether transcendental—the dream of some glowing imagination. To it the present life appears void of any moral perturbation ; man needs no redemption from it ; he requires no Divine impulse beyond what exists originally in his own faculties ; and as for immortality, it is a boon which he may long to realize, but the reality of which is by no means clear and certain. In a word, man is to the sensationalist *wholly material* ; his pleasure on earth is but the result of nervous affections ; and it is hard to give any reason why the capacity of thought itself should not pass away forever when the bodily structure is dissolved by death.

Such, we might predict, would naturally be the dictates of a sensational philosophy ; such, experience tells us, that they actually are. The first real philosopher of more recent times, who advocated the doctrines of materialism with zeal and ability, was Dr. Priestley ; and the influence of these doctrines upon his theological views was plain and undeniable. We see in him a living representative of the sensational theologian, in the first stage of his progress towards the system we have just described. That this is the tendency of Priestley's Philosophy, as it regards theological opinion, has been granted by many of his own professed followers, both in England and America. Not a few have felt and lamented the want of depth and intensity in spiritual ideas, which the inculcation of that philosophy gradually superinduced, and, as the best evidence of this conviction, have renounced sensationalism, in order to find in a more spiritual philosophy an antagonist tendency, and a more steady ground of belief in the soul, in immortality, and in God. Wherever sensationalism, however, has gone on, uncontrolled either by a belief in revelation on the one hand, or the antagonism of idealistic doctrines on the other, (a state of things

which we see exemplified in France at the commencement of the present century,) little additional impulse has there been required to draw the deluded minds of its votaries into such an abyss of scepticism as we have already described.

To go very particularly into this branch of the subject, however, might, we fear, seem to savor of religious partisanship rather than philosophical impartiality. To prevent this, we shall avoid entering into details, and confine ourselves to the assertion of this one fact: that where the study of nature, in its various phenomena, occupies the mind's chief attention; where there is the perpetual attempt to account for everything by some secondary, and that, perchance, a material cause; where the notion of matter absorbs that of force, and the trains of thought flow habitually towards the visible rather than the invisible, there has ever been a weakening of our ideas of God, of providence, of inspiration, of moral perfection, and of immortality hereafter. By the mere force of a mental habit, all our religious conceptions may be diluted without one of them being formally renounced; until, at length, the impression of them fades away, and they all sink together into oblivion.

These assertions, we fear, are exemplified to a very wide extent in the theological life of the present day. England is, at this moment, almost entirely destitute of a spiritual philosophy; for the few attempts which have been recently put forth to create one, have not as yet made any extensive progress, even amongst the more thoughtful of the people. Devoid, therefore, of this influence, and absorbed so largely in the practical, the minds, even of the educated classes, have everything to attract them to external interests, and almost nothing to lead them into the regions of deep spiritual reflection. It is useless to urge, in reply to this, that the people have pure religious principles inculcated upon them as a guide to the higher life; for, however pure may be the system of religion that is presented, yet, if reflective habits are not formed and nurtured, religion itself will quickly assume the coloring of the medium through which it is viewed, and ritualism boldly station itself instead of penitence at the confessional, and instead of prayer at the altar; yea, and will even mount the sacred desk in the place of holy intelligence, to defend a *system*, instead of contending earnestly for *truth*.

Ritualism, more or less, prevails in the present age amongst all communities; a necessary result, indeed, of the absence of a spirit-



ual philosophy. Even if there be in many cases sincerity enough, yet there is for the most part too little of the reflective, too much impatience at thinking beyond the leading-strings of custom or of sense, too weak a capacity of realizing the spiritual, except in name, to resist its chilling encroachments. The tendency of the religious life amongst us is almost always towards outward combination. That is to say, men rely upon *each other* in the battle of good against evil, instead of relying upon the might of truth to conquer the world. Christianity is thought to flourish in proportion as we can form societies, raise wealth to maintain them, and call together large masses of minds at once to express their joy, and feed their excitement. Little is it considered that *one mind*, going forth into the world, with an intense realization of the spiritual, armed with the deepest subjective convictions of truth, and cherishing a calm, but piercing faith, instead of a vague educational belief, will do more for the Church and for the world, than a thousand minds valiant only for a system.

To these convictions many are unquestionably becoming alive. There is, we believe, a perception nascent throughout Europe, that Christianity is as yet too much on the surface, and too little absorbed by the intellectual nature of man; that it has been too much an affair of education and profession, and too little a *great necessity* for satisfying the reason. As Catholicism was based upon the infallibility of the Church, so Protestantism has been based upon the infallibility of the Creed. Perhaps the next step in the historical development of Christianity may be that, in which both shall rally round the infallibility of absolute and eternal truth as developed in the Christian system, and leave all contention for the temporary and the relative to die away. To such a consummation the rise of a spiritual philosophy alone can lead the way.

Looking around, then, upon the philosophical horizon as a whole, we can hardly fail to see that, in spite of all the objective character of the present age, the star of sensationalism is on the wane. Never had it appeared with such brightness as it did at the close of the last century, and the beginning of the present. In every country, however, the reaction has taken place. Germany is still idealistic; France has abjured its materialism; England is becoming divided between the philosophy of Scotland and Germany; and even in America, Locke has become well nigh obsolete. The effects of this reaction are now to be looked for in all the different spheres of mental activity; and oh, may these pulsations of the



great spirit of humanity lead us ever nearer to happiness and to truth.

SECT. II.—*On the Tendencies of Modern Idealism.*

Few unprejudiced minds would now deny that idealism (we use the word in its broadest signification) occupies at present a proud position before the face of Europe. In one form or another it is enthroned in almost all the schools of learning where philosophy is studied. Glasgow and Edinburgh have both come back, with little exception, to the philosophy of Reid; and seem to be recanting the sensational heresy they began to imbibe under the impressive genius of Brown and Mylne. Cambridge no longer bows to the authority of Locke or Hartley; but, amidst all its devotedness to physical science, is evincing a manifest sympathy with intellectual philosophy, and clearly indicating that the tendency of many minds is verging towards the spiritual and the ideal. In the schools of France the power and energy of eclecticism, as developed in recent times, has turned the ideological system well nigh into a matter of past history; whilst Germany, from Koenigsberg to Basle, is still advocating the most profound systems of idealism. To the attentive observer it is most evident, that there has been infused into European society a stronger faith in the spiritual than existed at the commencement of the present century. The reign of sense has begun to give way to that of reflection; and it is now at least possible to bring out our thoughts respecting divine and supersensual things, even in a philosophical form, without being met with a smile either of pity or contempt. Literature has caught the radiance of these loftier conceptions, and poetry has found in them a field of delight, hitherto almost untried. Minds which could only relish the stimulating sensualism of Byron begin to feel that there is something which strikes a deeper note to the inmost soul in the poetic philosophy of Wordsworth. The influence of the flesh (to use a scriptural phrase), with its passions and instincts, is yielding to the might of the spirit. We shall proceed, therefore, to make a few observations in order to exhibit the present tendencies of idealism, as evinced in science, legislation, and religion.

1. And, first, with regard to science. Here the effect of metaphysical investigations is, perhaps, less readily observed than in

many other departments of human knowledge. Science depends so much upon empirical observation and experiment, that our attention is almost certain to be directed to *them* as the chief agents in its progress. It should not be forgotten, however, that the method of scientific research is owing very little to outward observation, but almost entirely to philosophical thinking; and that upon the employment of the right method mainly depends all real success. In addition to this, it should also be kept in mind that the *fundamental questions* in physics always partake of an abstract or speculative character, which can be elucidated by no empirical process whatever. The influence of idealism, therefore, within the department of science, will be seen chiefly in the improved methods of investigation, and in the more accurate study and fuller elucidation of the primary ideas on which science itself is founded. To verify this experimentally, we must see if it be borne out by the facts, which the recent history of science has presented.

For this purpose let any one compare the writings of our living philosophers with those of the brilliant age of the French Encyclopædia, and say whether the contrast in this respect is not at once most obvious. Let him take down a volume of D'Alembert, and after that, one on a similar subject by Whewell, and then observe how much more fully and satisfactorily the latter of the two has probed the primary conceptions of science, and how much more readily he draws inferences of pure reason from outward and visible things. The one generalizes the objects of nature in their external relations, the other traces the phenomena around us to the primary conception, subjectively considered, from which they spring. To the former nature is exactly what it appears to the eye—a stupendous machinery ever proceeding onwards by regular and unerring laws; to the latter it is a glorious mystery necessarily prompting us to the conception of spiritual agencies, which agencies are in fact only the “Indications of the Creator,” the varied forms in which a divine and spiritual power is diffusing itself through its own immense creation.

The importance of duly explaining the conceptions of science, and of drawing from the phenomena of the natural world inferences respecting the spiritual, is twofold. First, it is of no little value to the right interpretation of the facts which are adduced, that these conceptions should be clearly apprehended. This view of the case has been proved and illustrated by Dr. Whewell, accompanied with a most copious selection of examples drawn from

almost all the branches of natural philosophy. On this point, therefore, we shall not enter more fully at present, but refer the reader to the explanations he will find in the "Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences." But, secondly, apart from all this, the influence of nature upon the human mind, *morally considered*, is inconceivably altered when we view everything around us as replete with life, and that life divine. To our moral instincts, what avails a huge piece of unconscious mechanism, however perfect and harmonious? The idea of an eternal and irresistible necessity, however it may inspire us with awe, does not strike a single chord of our better feelings. But when this mechanism is recognized as the direct product of a mind, or a personality like our own, when it is regarded as answering some great and beneficent end, as moving ever onwards to some vast destiny; then, indeed, nature appears no longer dead; she becomes replete with moral significancy; she appeals to our deepest sympathies and feelings; she is the very link that connects us with Deity itself.

From these observations we form the general conclusion, that the tendency which idealism exhibits in connection with physical science, is to raise the idea of nature above that of mechanism, and to impart to it a *life* and a *soul*. Sensationalism views all the phenomena of the universe merely as a dull succession of changes. Idealism views them as the productions of a living agency. By the former, the conception of power as effecting change around us is depressed or disowned; by the latter, it is raised to the prominence which it rightly demands.

Accordingly, if power be something real (though supersensual) we are almost necessarily led, by an ideal philosophy, to inquire into its origin and nature. The *powers* inherent in unorganized masses—the *powers* of vegetable and animal life—the *powers* of passion and instinct—the *powers* of human intelligence—all become subjects, not of transcendental speculation, but of philosophical interest. We find, in them, so many secondary causes, more or less closely related to the one great first cause, from whom all existence is an emanation. And such deductions, it must be observed, fall strictly within the compass of science; they are rational inferences, drawn quite in accordance with the constitution of our own minds, and equally valid, in their origin, with the very axioms upon which induction itself is founded. Thus, by the application of idealism to the elucidation of science, we are introduced into a



new sphere of discovery, at once of intense interest, and incalculable value.

In confirmation of these views, we appeal to the words of Sir J. Herschel, at a late meeting of the British Association. "The fact is every year becoming more broadly manifest, by the successive application of scientific principles to subjects that had been hitherto empirically treated, that the great work of Bacon was not the completion, but, as he foresaw and foretold, only the commencement of his own philosophy; that we are yet only at the threshold of the palace of truth, which succeeding generations will range over as their own; a world of scientific inquiry, in which, *not matter only, and its properties*, but the far more rich and complex relations of life and thought, of passion and motive, of interest and action, will come to be regarded as its legitimate objects."

It is needless to say, that, upon sensational principles, such an extension of the objects of scientific research could never be realized; on idealistic principles, however, it becomes, at length, inevitable. Although science, therefore, may be cradled in visible and empirical facts, yet, by the aid of reason, it infers the existence of other facts and other agents which lie beyond sense; and, not content with this, it proceeds onward in its search, until all the secondary agencies are seen to converge in one centre, where is their common source, and that centre is God. Such, then, is the tendency which idealism exhibits in connection with physical research—a tendency, which is indispensable to the full development of scientific truth, and still more so to its due influence upon the mind of man.

Great as may be the service of idealism, however, in the department of natural philosophy, yet it may easily overstep the mark, and transform a science of rigid induction into one of mere hypothesis. Its abuse, in this respect, has been quite as frequently experienced in the world, as its proper use; and we should be far from faithful representers of its full tendencies, were we to pass by these errors unnoticed. The empirical extreme, we have seen, on the one hand, denies that the process of scientific investigation has anything to do, beyond the observation and classification of facts,—the idealistic extreme, on the other, contends that facts may be altogether dispensed with, and that a whole system of natural philosophy may be erected upon purely *a priori*, or rationalistic principles.

Schelling's "Natur-Philosophie," and Hegel's development of



the "Dialectic Process," are the most perfect instances we have of this extreme. In both cases there is a bold attempt made to grasp the fundamental law of *being*, in its most general form; and then, by logical inference, to construct the universe. The law being either assumed or discovered, or said to be known by intellectual intuition, in the outset, the attempt is made to evolve from it the whole process and the whole product of creation itself. Now we would not deny, indeed, but that reason, when stimulated and directed by facts, may sometimes *anticipate* the results of induction, and rise, almost by a leap, at some law of nature. It was thus that Goethe, by *a priori* thinking, enunciated the doctrine of the metamorphosis of plants, and thus, also, that Oken, stumbling on a skull amongst the Hartz mountains, exclaimed, as though by a sudden flash of thought, that it was vertebrated; but certain it is, that purely rational systems of physics have failed to give any solid advancement to science, and that they could not even have been constructed, without the knowledge derived from those who have been willing to tread the slow but certain road of observation and experiment. The healthy tendency of idealism is, to give life to nature, by showing God in the midst of his works; the extreme of this tendency is pantheism—nature absorbed in Deity. Of these two different tendencies, the former is now manifesting itself, both in England and some other countries, gradually widening the bounds of science, and leading to its more recondite researches; the latter is that which has excited so much attention in Germany, but which now appears to have passed its climax, and commenced its decline.

2. But we must now leave the walks of science, in order to seek the tendency of idealism, in the more practical department of legislation. We have already adverted to the three possible theories of government, based respectively upon the three fundamental conceptions of the human mind. Of these three theories, all the systems of mere expediency, however skilfully they may be adapted and expressed, are at once rejected, by an idealistic philosophy, as hollow and unsound. Idealism says, Man is not a mere animal, seeking the satisfaction of his instincts; he does not regard corporal pleasure as the sole aim of his existence; he does not look upon self-interest as the only rule of his conduct, nor upon physical force as the only motive to which we may appeal in matter of government. On the contrary, it protests, that man has a moral nature, cognizant of an eternal justice, whose laws are inviolable;

it asserts, that there is a supreme ruler of the world, the principles of whose government are sacred, and against which it is vain for man to vent his nostrums of fancied utility. In a word, it declares that institutions are not to be adjudged right, because they may appear expedient, but that, relying upon the unerring sense of justice which God has implanted in our minds, they are to be adjudged as most assuredly expedient, because they are right.\*

That the idealistic principles of legislation are gaining ground in the present day, we entertain but little doubt. Coleridge (in the "Friend") was one of the first of the modern idealistic writers, who showed the application of a reflective philosophy to the subject of government; and nowhere, perhaps, do we find the medium between expediency, on the one hand, and the vicious employment of reason, as the source of political institutions, on the other, more clearly pointed out, than in the first four chapters of his section on the principles of political knowledge. Albeit he gave, perhaps, too wide a scope to the doctrine of expediency in his politics, yet his entire rejection of it in the deeper principles of morals, (which are at the basis of all politics,) and the power with which he contended for moral truth, in its application to the exigencies of society, and the wants of human life—all this rendered him a worthy pioneer in the pathway of political reformation.

In speaking, however, of the politics of idealism, who does not at once turn to the erratic and versatile genius of Carlyle? Let none suppose, that, because the works he has successively presented to the public contain no systematic statement of political principles, therefore there are no specific principles to be gained from them. So far from this, the philosophy of legislation blazes forth from almost every page. Nowhere, perhaps, are the profoundest wants of humanity, in its social state, probed with a firmer yet tenderer hand—nowhere, the true remedies for social evil more clearly pointed out. In saying this, we do not render our unqualified assent to all the sentiments he has brought forward on this topic;—for who could ever do so without almost clothing himself in the author's own individuality?—but we mean to say, that he has dived down to those deep, and too often hidden sources, at the very heart of human nature, from which all sound principles of legislation must flow, and grasped the true theory of human society. If it be asked, in what respect, and by what means he has done

\* It is needless, perhaps, to explain, that we refer here only to the *moral grounds* of legislation; the peculiar adaptation of these grounds must, after all, be determined according to the circumstances of the case.

this ; I answer, by looking upon life in the light of an idealistic philosophy, and thus realizing the fact, that men are held together, not by motives of self-interest, but by the spiritual laws of their common nature.

The two great ideas, of *Mind*, and of *God*—mind, in its intellectual developments and moral principles, and God, in his relation to the world—lie at the foundation of all his political theories. God is regarded as the source of all order—man, as the exemplar of God himself. What God has constituted must be right and expedient ; and to know what God wills, with reference to human society, we have to study his law, in the moral nature impressed upon his image below. Strip society of all its embellishments, tear away all its artificial trappings, let the conventional and the unreal depart, and what then is left ? The answer is, *Man, as man*—man, with his original constitution—with his soul and his body, as God made them—with his divinity alone around him. Sensationalism would have us neglect this original constitution, and follow mere expediency as our guide. Idealism shows us, that it is vain to make artificial laws to rule mankind, while the very laws of our moral nature are violated and set at nought. We look upon the political views of Carlyle as intensely significant of the tendency of the present age. Individual though they be, in their form, yet they are echoing the thoughts of a thousand minds, and the feelings of a thousand hearts. It is clear, that the reaction now experienced against sensational principles, is preparing multitudes to enter into spiritual views of human society, and though such views may sound strange and mysterious at present, yet they will assuredly become, ere long, the practical truths, by which man's whole political life must be regulated.

Should any one doubt the truth of this anticipation, then let him look around upon all the chief political theories of the present age. Widely different as these may be, in many other respects, yet they well-nigh all agree in rejecting the sensational principle, and appealing to the deeper elements of our nature. Take as example, the theory of Dr. Arnold, (a man who was as little infected with the prejudices, and who as fully sympathized with the spirit of the age, as any great thinker of his time,) and however Utopian some may pronounce it to be, yet who can deny, that he has taken many deep and truthful views of social life, such as would do honor to any country, and to any period ? Take as another example, that of the modern Oxford politicians. What does Mr. Sewell contend



for with his church-supported state? What, but a legislation, that shall apprehend man as a rational, a moral, and a religious being, that shall govern him through the medium of his faith in God, as well as through the outward penalties of human law? No matter whether his theory of a Catholic Church be right or wrong; dismiss, if you should think proper, his dogma of the succession, as being the mere war-cry of a party; still there is the idea—there the assertion, that nations cannot be governed by utilitarianism; that all law flows originally from God, and his moral creation in the soul of man.

Look, again, at the principles asserted by the politicians of the so-called "Young England" school. Listen, for example, to Mr. Gladstone, in his eloquent strictures on the state-conscience and the state-personality, and see how firmly he asserts it to be the highest duty of Government to evolve the social life of man by moral and religious motives. "There is, indeed, a doctrine," he remarks, "that political society exists only for material, outward, and mere earthly objects: that it is a contrivance prompted by necessity for the defence of life and property, through the establishment of peace and order; that it is a formula for producing a maximum of individual freedom, by an apparent sacrifice, a small payment beforehand of the same commodity from each member of the community to the State. Here is the fulfilment of the declaration of Burke, that the age of economists, sophists, and calculators has arrived. Here is the twin-sister of that degraded system of ethics, or individual morality; the injurious legacy of Locke, which received its full popular development from Paley, and was reduced to forms of greater accuracy by Bentham: which, in logical self-consistency, sought to extirpate the very notion of duty from the human heart, and even to erase its name from language; and which made pleasure and pain the moral poles of the universe."

All these phenomena, and many others now manifesting themselves in the political literature of our country, as we regard them, are but the expansions of the idealistic spirit of the age. True, they may gather church-principles, and other principles around them; but they are none the less the offspring of the deep conviction now settling in all thinking minds, that neither man nor society "can live by bread alone." To what point these different phenomena may tend, it is not easy to foresee. We may securely hope, however, that the more reflection, the more humanity, the



more real knowledge of the human mind, in its secret spring, is thrown into the political principles of our legislators, the less there will be of mere party-seeking and party-subserviency; and the more will the solemn office of the nation's rulers become too fearful a responsibility, to allow fixed principles to be shaken by individual interests.

There is only one extreme against which idealism has to beware, and that is, the state of things in which would-be philosophers, assuming that they have probed the human mind to its centre, take it upon them to enunciate fixed political axioms as the offspring of their social science—begin to exclaim that the age of reason is now to return, and, on the ground of their own philosophic infallibility, seek to overturn all the ancient landmarks of society. Such theories were rife throughout Europe during the stirring age of the French Revolution, and led many to views of political society as shallow as they were Utopian. This extreme, however, being avoided, we can augur nothing but good from the application of a rational philosophy to the exigencies of social life.

3. It now only remains for us, in this section, to observe the influence of idealism upon the religion of the age. It has been already shown upon *a priori* grounds, that, under the reign of sensationalism, the religious life must become cold and feeble; and we have pointed out some actual facts which seem to bear out the conclusion. The natural inference is, that some element of idealism is necessary to the proper expansion of theological ideas in the human mind. In strict accordance with this inference, we find, that, in a sensational age, the grounds, even of natural religion, are secretly undermined, as was eminently the case during the influence of the French materialism. On the other hand, it is by those chiefly, whose philosophy partakes more of the rational or ideal, that these grounds have been fenced and defended.

Writers, for example, like M'Culloch and Whewell, who have applied the highest scientific knowledge to maintain the validity of our natural religious conceptions, are, philosophically speaking, most evidently idealistic in their tendency; and we can hardly resist the inference, that it was by the same habit of mind, which led them to rise above the sensationalism so common to physical inquirers, that they were brought to gaze with such intensity upon the conceptions which form the basis of man's natural religion. The one set of thoughts is, indeed, very closely connected with the other. Science, when transcending the bounds of sense, must

soon soar upwards to God ; and the right being once admitted to adduce unseen agencies from the visible phenomena around us, there will soon follow, from the infinite design displayed in the universe, the deep conviction of an infinite designer.

The present influence of idealism, however, on this department of theology, not only tends to place the ordinary *a posteriori* argument in a clear and commanding light, but it has added to this the force of considerations, which are derived from the constitution and from the instinctive conceptions of the human mind. Lord Brougham, in his "Preliminary Discourse," has dwelt excellently upon this part of the argument, in so far as the constitution of the mind is concerned ; drawing from it proofs of design equally strong with any which could be selected from the external world. But, in addition even to this, there are some few writers, chiefly those imbued with German philosophy, who have begun to make powerful use of the argument derived from our *fundamental conceptions*. This method of proof certainly appears, to those unaccustomed to abstract thinking, somewhat obscure and inconclusive ; but it has the merit of becoming more forcible the more it is inwardly realized ; and we much doubt whether the tone of metaphysical thinking in our own country will not, ere long, render an appeal to these conceptions the most powerful, as also the most popular proof of the foundation-principles of natural theology. Such it has long become among the German divines ; such, we believe, it will become everywhere else, when minds are no longer so sensualized, that its cogency is obscured and its moral strength invalidated. As we can imagine an angel in heaven to believe in God from its own deep intuition of his existence, so will men attain a similar intuitive persuasion, in proportion as they raise themselves above the material into the region of the spiritual and the divine.

But it is not merely upon the grounds of natural religion that idealism exerts its influence ; we may trace its tendencies with equal clearness in the effects which it produces upon the varied phases of the religious life actually existing among different sections of the Christian Church. It is a fact universally allowed, that there has been a great increase of spiritual vigor infused during the last ten years into the English Church. The cold, dry, lifeless formality, so common twenty or thirty years ago, has been broken in upon by some living operating religious ideas. Whether those ideas are right or wrong, in a theological point of view, is another question—still, there they are, touching the deeper springs of hu-

man nature, and rousing hundreds at the present moment to thought and emotion. Whence, then, have these movements originated? Not from the people—not from direct Christian effort—nothing of the kind: they have originated in a few minds, deeply imbued with an ancient, and, it may be, a mystical philosophy. These minds have revolted from a round of cold and stiff morality; they have abjured sensationalism in metaphysics and in ethics; they have scattered their idealism, clothed in different garbs, on every side; and, as a consequence of this, they have roused the minds of thousands to a new religious life. True, it may be a religious life that combines much mysticism in its forms and its sentiments; but it is no less the offspring of idealism, in its reaction against a mechanical age.

Look again to that community which, as the professed nursling of Priestley and Belsham, was formerly the true representative of a sensational theology. However unwilling some may be to admit the fact, yet it cannot be concealed that an idealistic philosophy, the natural antagonist of the Hartleian and all similar principles, has invaded their theological system, and is rapidly working a marked change in their whole religious life. Whether this change will lead to a fresh expansion of the elements of Christian faith, whether to pantheistic mysticism, or whether to religious rationalism, properly so called, it yet remains to be seen; certain it is, that the sensational point of view must give way to *something more spiritual*, of whatever hue its spiritualism may be.

If we pass over from England to France, there we have a most instructive example of the working of speculative philosophy upon the religious life of a people. The close of the Revolution found France almost without a religion at all. Direct efforts to awaken religious faith seemed altogether unavailing. The Catholic and Protestant Churches were alike powerless to arouse the mass of the people from their lethargy and unbelief. Just at this point the eclectic philosophy came to their aid, and under its influence, the belief in God and immortality is again spreading among the people. We do not say that the religion of the eclectic philosophers is by any means a perfect one, or that it contains in it anything approaching to the whole of the elements of Christianity; but still it holds up a God to be worshipped, an immortality to be secured, a soul to be inspired; and where these thoughts are impressed, there cannot be an entire indifference to religious truth and religious duty. Admit even that there are doctrines maintained by the eclectics



which would disarm inspiration of its glory, that would destroy everything peculiar to the Christian scheme, that would place Christianity itself down under the same category with the religions of mere human invention ; still this does not prevent the great ideas which they embody from exerting an influence upon the mind, and preparing it for better things. It may, perhaps, sound harsh in some ears, but we firmly believe that the spiritual philosophy of France has done more to bring back the people of that country to a sense of religious obligation, than all the direct efforts of Christian zeal combined. Such efforts are for the most part useless, where the conscience has become seared ; where the belief in God has died out ; where the hope of immortality has sunk into oblivion. Restore these thoughts to the people, and Christian effort will soon tell upon them with redoubled force.

Whilst idealism has been working beneficially for the religion of France, in Germany, on the contrary, its more extreme and daring features have unhappily developed themselves, in connection with the religious life of that country. In our section on the German Idealism, we have already shown the vicious excess to which the rationalistic speculations of the present age have been carried. Neglecting that vast and important element of our knowledge, which is derived from empirical observation, the philosophers of that school have endeavored to lay down their *a priori* axioms, and then to draw after them in one immense chain of logical sequence the whole mass of human learning, whether of a moral or a demonstrative character. They have not been willing to tolerate anything whatever that is merely experimental, or even that includes an inductive process. Whether it be politics, art, natural science, or even history itself, all must be deduced from rational principles, and built up by deductive reasoning ; so that we are even told what the past state of the world must have been, and what logically it must hereafter be.

This, then, being the spirit of their philosophy, it is not to be wondered at, that religion should be drawn into the same stream of logical inference, and pared down into perfect consistency with it ; nor should it be an object of surprise that they have approached Christianity itself in the same spirit with which they have approached everything else. Intolerant of moral evidence, of experience, of testimony, they have swept away indiscriminately, in one torrent of logical argumentation, the historical, the inspired, the miraculous ; that is, the whole objective element of



Christianity; and have left nothing behind to supply their place, except the *a priori* religious conceptions of the human mind.

To see the folly of this procedure, as applied to religion, we only have to observe it in the case of other branches of human knowledge. Imagine all the labors of the historian discarded, and history itself only studied from the page of some speculative theorist; imagine the experience of the statesman set at nought, and a nation of living men, with all their clashing interests, governed by some logical hypothesis; imagine the experiments of the natural philosopher all neglected, and the phenomena of the universe deduced from rationalistic grounds alone; and we need hardly say that these glorious spheres of mental investigation would at once sink down into deserved contempt. And why would this be? Not assuredly because there are no *a priori* principles involved in these sciences, not because there is no room for deductive reasoning in them, not because they are exclusively experimental; no, but because there is an element of *fact* in them all, which must be observed and employed, before a firm platform is gained on which logical reasoning can rest.

So it is also in Christianity. While bare natural religion is a question of reason, Christianity is a question of facts. Leave out those facts, rest the whole system upon rational axioms or deductive processes, and Christianity, too, like the other branches we have mentioned, will sink down to a mere visionary and hypothetical system, proving at the very best but an excrescence and a useless appendage to natural theology.

And then, at length, what will natural theology itself become under the guidance of the same philosophy? Ask the extreme idealists of the present day, and they will tell you that God is one with the universe itself. The glorious conception of the great Jehovah, which we derive from the display of his wisdom, power, and love, in the creation without, the constitution of our minds within, and the intuition of our rational and moral nature, soon sinks down into a vague personification of the human consciousness. The final result of such a theology is, that the divine is dragged down to a level with the human, instead of the human being raised up (as it is by Christianity) to the divine. Thus, then, the extremes of sensationalism and idealism at length meet. The one says that God is the universe, the other that the universe is God. Diderot and Strauss can here shake hands, and alike rejoice in the impious purpose of sinking the personality of the Deity

into an abstraction, which the holy cannot love, and which the wicked need not fear. Such is the extreme of idealism in its influence upon Christian theology, an extreme which contravenes and destroys all the good which at first it promised to effect. The German religious rationalism, however, it is pretty evident, has already passed its climax ; the battle has begun to grow faint, and the first symptoms of decline have appeared. When *they* have begun to find repose, it is not altogether improbable that *we* may be in the heat of contest. That England, as well as Germany, must pass through the ordeal of religious rationalism, we regard as a matter of more than probability. But, confident in the ultimate victory of truth, we shall rejoice in the conflict if it break away the shackles which still rob the conscience of its full and righteous freedom, and leave us a religion of manly vigor, that requires no arm to support it but that of its own undying energy.

### SECT. III.—*On the Tendencies of Modern Scepticism.*

We have pointed out, in a former chapter, three subordinate species of scepticism, namely, the scepticism of authority, the scepticism of ignorance, and absolute scepticism. The first of these, moreover, we have shown to prevail chiefly in England ; the first and second in France ; the third (though to a small extent) in Germany. In looking upon the features of the present age as a whole, we should by no means come to the conclusion that it is marked by any peculiar tendencies to scepticism of either of these descriptions. So far from that, we think that the sceptical spirit which developed itself so largely during the last century, has during the present become visibly feebler ; so that the feeling of the age, instead of tending to unbelief, is rather seeking after a faith of a more fixed and comprehensive kind.

In place of its being considered the mark of a manly and penetrating mind to doubt what the rest of mankind receive as truth, it is now attributed more accurately to ignorance, or to pedantry. The common sense of the world has pronounced scepticism to be a reproach. Our readers will, of course, bear in mind that we are not now referring particularly to religious scepticism, but to the spirit of unbelief, or the habit of resisting evidence in whatsoever department it may be. A certain degree of incredulity, indeed, is manifestly advantageous to the interests of truth, inasmuch as it

ever operates as a check upon false theories ; but to carry it out in cases where evidence is clear, or to require demonstration when a cumulative proof only can be attained, is now pretty generally felt to be a perversion of our natural faculties, and a manifestation of folly altogether beneath the dignity of a wise man. We must attempt however, to gather up the phenomena which scepticism is now displaying in connection with the departments of science, legislation, and religion. In this way we shall be able better to see its present tendencies.

And, first, within the precincts of *science*, the influence of scepticism can now rarely enter. Time, indeed, was, when the philosopher not only had to encounter unbelief, but persecution as well. The day, however, has now gone by when mankind could persuade themselves that the sun moved round the earth, because some mitred head pronounced it to be so. Rome no longer sways the opinions of the learned, even within its own communion ; the Vatican pretends not to supreme authority in philosophy ; nor does the college of Cardinals assume the functions of a scientific institution. All scepticism of this palpable character has been swept away by the advancing lustre of demonstrative truth ; and science now marches forward comparatively free from such obstructions.

The only instance in which scientific truth now meets with opposition is, when it runs contrary to some religious theory, and enlists that strongest of passions, I mean, theological animosity, against it. Geology has had to contend with a scepticism of this nature, by which many of its leading facts, and those, too, resting upon an evidence as palpable as the human reason could well require, have been rejected on the ground of their contradiction to some previous hypothesis. The motives which have given birth to such an exhibition of authoritative scepticism, we do not venture to impugn. They may have been very pure and very reverential : but quite assured are we that they have been very unwise. It never seems to be imagined by those who reject evidence of a convincing nature, on the ground of some prejudication of the matter in hand, that their own fondest and most sacred beliefs rest upon evidence of the very same kind.

I will suppose, for example, that a man rejects the antiquity of the crust of the earth, on the plea (though a false one) that it contradicts the Mosaic cosmogony. On what ground, we would ask, does he accept and hold so firmly the truth of the Pentateuch ? His faith in it must rest primarily upon testimony borne to certain



facts, and then be confirmed by conclusions, drawn by processes of reasoning, from the facts presented. But this is precisely the evidence which the geologist brings to establish the principles he asserts. He presents, first of all, *facts* of which he himself and others have been eye-witnesses ; from these facts he draws, *with great caution*, certain conclusions ; and then, on the ground of the truth of the testimony, and the validity of the reasoning which builds itself upon it, he summons the belief of mankind. On what plea, then, does any man admit the evidence in the one case, and reject it in the other ; or, if he repudiates the conclusion of the geologist, how can he complain if another repudiates that of the theologian ? We see not that there is any superior clearness and certainty either with regard to the facts themselves or the reasoning based upon them, in the first case than there is in the second. To deny evidence blindly is always a dangerous thing to venture upon ; for the right of denial admitted in one case may soon be applied to another ; and the mistaken zeal of saving a theological truth at the expense of a philosophical one, may end in involving both in a common doubt or destruction. Where unquestionable evidence asserts two facts apparently contradictory, we must await a fresh apocalypse, natural or divine, to point out their reconciliation. Opposition to scientific conclusions, however, on religious grounds, is fast wearing away ; men are beginning to see that the same evidence cannot be regarded as a shadow in one instance, and a substance in the other.

Secondly, in the department of *legislation*, the scepticism of authority has also exercised some influence during the present century, tending in every instance to the maintenance of the principles of absolutism. It can hardly be wondered at, that after all the Utopian theories of government, which France witnessed as the offspring of the Revolution, a reaction should take place, and all faith in human legislation be shaken. This reaction has led some in recent times to deny that the capacity of realizing any sound principles of legislation exists in human nature, and has brought them to rest the whole fabric of political power upon the authority of God, as expressed through his Church. If we would see, therefore, the natural tendency of scepticism as it regards the theory of legislation, we shall find it most clearly exhibited in the present absolutists of France, of whom we have already furnished some account in a previous chapter.

The reason why scepticism should result in such a system, it is



not difficult to account for. To live without government at all, every man would admit and feel to be an incalculable evil; when, therefore, scepticism undermines the whole superstructure of political science, the only resource left is to take refuge in some divine command, and so to amplify the power of the keys as to embrace within it the whole authority both of Church and State.

The very same tendency, which we have seen developing itself in the principles of absolutism in France, has begun to prevail, to a certain extent, in England. Many hints have been thrown out, respecting the uncertainty of all political principles not based upon the authority of revelation. These hints, coupled with a lofty assumption of ecclesiastical power, have betrayed a secret desire in the minds of some to reinstate a spiritual despotism throughout the country. That this may never take place is devoutly to be hoped for. Experience sufficiently attests that national greatness and national prosperity can only result from carrying out those great principles of government, by which the interests of the whole people are properly balanced, regulated, and watched over. When power and property come irresponsibly into the hands of a class, to the degradation of the rest of the community, the violated moral laws will soon revenge their own unjust infringement.

With a spiritual despotism this is pre-eminently the case. However plausible it may seem in theory, to refer human power to the power of God as its source; however excellent to put the government of the country into the hands of the professed guardians of religious truth, and intrust the chief authority to those who have to deal with the most potent influences of the human soul; yet the history of the past sufficiently proves, that of all despotisms, a spiritual despotism is the worst; that of all the tyranny under which the world has groaned, none is so fearful as that which, not content with holding the body in subjection, binds the very soul in the adamant chains of superstitious fear. The sceptic in legislation, however, may become a democrat as well as an absolutist; he may break down all the established principles of government and head a lawless mob; or he may set up an irresponsible power, in the form of a spiritual tyranny. But in the one case, as in the other, the distrust of rational political power leads alike to the most bitter consequences of anarchy and confusion.

To conclude this section, we must notice, thirdly, the tendencies of scepticism in connection with *religion*. By scepticism generally, we mean the habit of distrusting evidence; this is the uni-

versal basis from which all the various forms of it arise. Distrust of evidence originates in various ways; most frequently, perhaps, in the following:—The confiding, unwavering, all-embracing faith of childhood is found, as life advances, to be partly deceptive: many instances occur in which its confidence is misplaced; and then the spirit of doubt begins to operate upon the mind, and to darken the bright atmosphere in which it first lived. Hence our faith in evidence sensibly declines; more especially in that kind of evidence which has been found to lead the mind astray.

Now, all evidence is generically of two kinds—it is either subjective or objective; it either comes from the soul within or from the world without; in other words, it is either the evidence of our own faculties or that of testimony.\* If, on the one side, our own faculties have led us astray by wrong conclusions, we are apt to have our faith shaken in their validity; or if, on the other hand, men have proved false or mistaken to us in their testimony, then we are apt to distrust testimony at large. This aptitude, whether it refer to the evidence of our faculties, or to that of our fellow-men, when strengthened and developed in the mind, leads to what we term *scepticism*.

Our present inquiry, then, is simply this, “What will be the natural effect of distrusting evidence upon man’s religious life?” The effect, it is manifest at first sight, will be very different according to *what kind* of evidence is received or what rejected. If both kinds are rejected, then the scepticism is universal, involving all human knowledge in one common destruction; if the evidence of our reasoning faculties is rejected, then revealed theology may still flourish, but with the distrust of all philosophical truth; or, lastly, if the evidence of testimony generally is doubted, then natural theology may live, but Christianity, historically viewed, will die. According to this deduction, therefore, the tendencies of scepticism, as it regards Christianity, are threefold. Either, first, it may attack and stifle all religious belief; or, secondly, it may admit the historical element (as a revelation resting upon testimony), while it denies the validity of the human faculties; or, thirdly, it may allow a natural religion, grounded on rationalistic principles, but reject the testimony which supports the truth of a revelation.

Of these tendencies, the two last are abundantly exhibited in the present day. In England, a distrust and contempt for reason pre-

\* Under the evidence of our faculties is included that of the senses and personal experience.

vails amongst religious circles to a wide extent: many Christians think it almost a matter of duty to decry the human faculties as poor, mean, and almost worthless; and thus seek to exalt piety at the expense of intelligence. Delusive hope! Is not Christianity itself a matter of intelligence? Must not its claims to authority be weighed by the human reason? Must not intelligence develop the germ of truth given us in the word, to a beautiful and comprehensive system to be realized in the world? The ultimate effect of this species of scepticism can be nothing else than to strip religion of its energy, to turn the power of intelligent faith into a blind attachment to a creed; and amidst all its zeal for revealed truth, to undermine secretly the very pedestal on which in peaceful security it reposes. The very same sceptical tendency is, at this moment, displaying similar features in France. What else is the storm, which is now raging against the philosophical instruction afforded at the universities of that country? And what could show more plainly than this, that the scepticism of authority, if allowed to have its full sway, would not hesitate to hurl to the ground everything that could possibly interfere with the blind credulity, which in matters of testimony it seeks to inculcate? How long this contempt for reason may continue, it is difficult to say; in our own country we believe it to be on the decrease; and from its final disappearance we look, not for any danger to Christianity, but for a fresh vigor to infuse itself into the popular religion of the age.

The third tendency of scepticism, that which assumes the form of a distrust for testimony, is far more widely extended in Germany than it is in our own country. The validity of reason is there seldom denied; in many instances, indeed, its province is made far too extensive, so that the historical element of Christianity is entirely absorbed in the rational. Such is the real nature of Strauss's hypothesis, of which we hear so much in the present day. The testimony upon which the historical authenticity of the Gospels rests, is there, by a combination of ingenious artifices, weakened and depreciated, the most competent witnesses are passed over as not strictly trustworthy, the outward fact is made more and more symbolical of moral sentiment, until, at length, the history is all transformed into mythology, and the moral element left, as the sole content of the written word.

Of the two phases of scepticism we have just described, we believe the one to be in the end equally injurious with the other.



Distrust in one kind of testimony may very easily produce distrust in another kind ; so that either phase may prove one stepping-stone to that universal unbelief, which involves all human knowledge in doubt and confusion. The only method by which religion can attain its full bloom in any mind, is by an intelligent confidence, both in the validity of our faculties and the testimony of the past. The one must lay the foundation—the other must erect the superstructure of the religious life.

#### SECT. IV.—*On the Tendencies of Modern Mysticism.*

Mysticism, viewed simply in its principle, is built upon a true idea, namely, that there is in human nature a primitive faith which precedes and transcends reason. This faith, it is true, has been termed by Cousin *the spontaneous effort of reason*, and is thus identified with the other operations of our rational nature ; but still the fact remains, that there is a truth-organ within the human soul, which leads us to certain beliefs, long before they can be verified by any logical or philosophical deduction.

Such an intuitive or spontaneous perception of truth frequently accompanies the exercise of the feelings and affections of our nature. The moral and social feelings, for example, necessarily involve some conceptions respecting human duty and human destiny, in which we may place confidence quite irrespective of the deductions of reason. In like manner, the æsthetic and religious emotions lead us to the contemplation of an infinite beauty, perfection, wisdom, and goodness, long ere reason has begun to construct her argument for the being of a God. To a certain extent, then, we may put faith in the feelings, we may regard them as primitive witnesses for truth, in which we can repose confidence as long as their voice comes to us with clear and distinct articulation. On this ground it is, then, that mysticism professes to build ; and it is the element of truth which it thus embodies, that has given it all its strength.

But whilst this is the case, there is great danger lest the authority of our feelings should be made too extensive, so that we should be led to mistake mere evanescent impressions for sober truths, and elevate the inspiration of the emotions altogether above the conclusions of reason. In fact, the sphere of knowledge in which we can trust these spontaneous impulses, is very confined ; over the greater



part of the domains of truth, the perceptive and the reasoning faculties must necessarily be predominant. Most of the branches of human science have to be pursued simply with a steady and logical precision ; so that in their case the influence of feeling can do little else than produce error and confusion ; in other words, can lead only to a false and bewildering mysticism.

To verify the truth of these remarks, we have only to follow the same course which we have pursued with reference to the other three systems ; that is, to observe the influence of mysticism upon some of the principal departments of human investigation. First, with regard to SCIENCE, it might seem difficult to see where there could be any room for mysticism to operate in the case of investigations, which are so precise and definite in their character. It must not be overlooked, however, that science has its higher as well as its lower movement. The lower physics, those which refer simply to the classification of obvious phenomena, can hardly be subjected to any mystifying process ; but the higher physics, those which tread upon the verge of ontology, and theorize upon the more recondite causes operating in nature, afford abundant material for the development of some of the most remarkable phenomena of mysticism.

Schelling, for example, although he began as an idealist, yet has introduced into his later productions a large element of mysticism ; attempting, as he does, to give a theosophic view of nature in all her varied phenomena. He proposes to show that nature is homogeneous with mind ; that it is, strictly speaking, the self-development of Deity ; that, in other words, it is the infinite objectifying itself in the finite. On this principle he enters into various explanations of attraction, gravitation, light, heat, magnetism, electricity, &c., carrying on his theories into the different regions of creation, so as at length to afford a connected deduction of all the phenomena of organic and inorganic existence.

These theosophic views have been further developed by the pupils and followers of Schelling. Schubert has written the "History of Nature," beginning from the objective point of view, and tracing it up to God, the soul of the world : Baader has begun from the *subjective* side ; and, from the phenomena of mind, has inferred the order of the universe : while Steffens has united both sides in himself, and shown the absolute unity of nature and the soul. In all these writers, there is one prominent purpose exhibited—that of destroying the bare mechanical views of nature, which men have

usually entertained, and showing it to be a living manifestation of mind ; yea, to be nothing else than the infinite mind itself, in its various potencies and reflections. These philosophers, accordingly, imagine that the study of nature is only just dawning ; that the time is coming, when, from our direct intuition of the soul of the world, in its original essence, the whole theory and phenomena of creation shall be fully explained ; that all observation and experiment may be then dispensed with, and natural philosophy find its completion in the deductions of our pure reason.

The tendency of such a system can, of course, be no other than to discourage experimental philosophy, and to reduce physical science to a string of deductions, resting upon certain original principles, claimed to be intuitive. To the due employment of our higher reason, in the department of physics, we can conceive of no valid objection. Where conclusions can be drawn, in consistence with the laws of our rational nature, let us boldly draw them, though they should lead us into the depths of ontological speculation ; but the admission of mysticism into these regions, is something quite of a different nature. Reason, properly speaking, only erects its deductions upon observed and tangible facts, (such as that of the divine existence, from the marks of design displayed in the universe ;) but the mysticism we have described *assumes* its foundation principles, and erects its superstructure upon them in such a manner that the facts are made entirely subservient to the theory, instead of the theory emanating from the facts.

Mysticism, again, has made some few, and rather abortive efforts, to mould into a new form the principle and the details of legislation. Mr. Greaves, to whom we have before referred, has attempted to found a new system of spiritual socialism, by discovering the inward subjective bond, by which men are united in society, and seeking to strengthen this bond by moral or educational means and appliances. "The religious, moral, political, and commercial social arrangements," he observes, "have been based, from the commencement of society, upon the *modal* natures, instead of the *universal* natures." He proposes, accordingly, to look beneath the surface of humanity, down to the universal essence of which it consists, to draw forth into intense operation the love-spirit (as he denominates it), and, by these means, to lead men to dwell everywhere without the wants or wishes of wealth, without desire of individual accumulation, or any inequality of condition. Such were a few of the benevolent dreams of this philanthropic

enthusiast. Happy, indeed, would it be, if the love of self were to perish, and the world were to become united in the strongest ties of universal charity.

This consummation, however, we fear, is not to be attained by the mysticism we are now considering. We trust, indeed, that it may be attained at last ; but this will only be when the visions of prophecy are fulfilled, and the spirit of true Christianity animates every soul under heaven. We need not particularly refer to the analogous doctrines of St. Simon and Fourier in France, who have entertained similar visions of social perfection in the coming state of society. Far would we be from discouraging, even were we able to do so, any efforts of this nature to call forth the hidden sympathies of mankind towards each other ; but we see not why the ideas of human brotherhood, which are quite familiar to the mind of every right-thinking Christian man, should be dressed up in a strange and eccentric garb, and then propounded as some new system which is to regenerate society. We fully believe that everything good, belonging to these doctrines, may be found in the social spirit of Christianity ; and that all which they contain beyond this, is the ebullition of an ardent but false enthusiasm, yearning after better things than society can now present.

It is in religion, however, that the tendencies of modern mysticism are chiefly visible. In this department there is, as we imagine, a true and a false mysticism—a true one, inasmuch as the direct communion of the soul of man with the infinite gives rise to many phenomena, which it were vain altogether to omit—and a false one, inasmuch as there is a universal proneness in mankind to run into extremes upon all those subjects which excite their deepest feelings. To test the question, whether there be such a thing as a true mysticism in religion, we have simply to ask, whether our whole knowledge on this subject comes from reason and revelation combined, or whether there is not another element of truth, flowing from our spiritual feelings or our religious consciousness. The primary truths of natural theology may, of course, be viewed as deductions of reason ; other religious ideas, again, come from an immediate revelation ; but are we to say, that this exhausts our sources of religious knowledge ? Is there not a direct communication of the human mind with the Divine ? and does not this communion give us a deeper insight into the divine nature than reason or revelation, or both of them combined could ever afford ? It is generally admitted, that the highest conception of Deity which



our reason can form, is a very cold and abstract one—one which can hardly reach beyond the notion of a first cause, and with difficulty attain to that of an infinite personality ; and even if we come to the page of revelation itself, yet all the descriptions which it gives us of the attributes of God, form but a very indistinct image upon a mind that simply puts these notions together by a logical process, and has no community of feeling with Deity itself. If it be the case, therefore, that for gaining a deep insight into the perfections of God, we must rise to a communion of the heart and sympathy of feeling with him, then there is in religion a true and valid mysticism, which has to be cherished in every mind that thirsts after God. Mysticism of this nature forms, in fact, a regular portion of the common belief of all Christian countries. The theological doctrine of divine influence is but the dogmatical mode of expressing a fact, which is almost equally evident on the principles of natural religion ; namely, that ere we can enter fully into the conception of God, both in his own nature and in his relation to the world, the spirit of man must be brought into mysterious communion and sympathy with the Spirit of God.

But there is also a false mysticism, as well as a true, to which we must for a moment advert. This is of two kinds. First, when communion with the divine mind is supposed to be gained by some artificial agency ; or, secondly, when it is supposed to be of such a nature, as to realize the full idea of inspiration. If a man assert, that, by the performance of certain outward acts, the human spirit can be united in sympathy with that of God, he advocates an incredible mysticism, inasmuch as he attributes spiritual functions to bare material causes. Or, again, if a man asserts that, by any means whatever, whether physical or mental, he has such an intuition of spiritual truth, that it completely transcends, and renders useless, the agency of his natural faculties, he is likewise a mystic ; for he is laying claim to a species of inspiration, which is altogether foreign to our present experience in the world. We do not say, that he is laying claim to anything in itself impossible ; but we mean that inspiration, in this sense, is a phenomenon so extraordinary, that it must prove itself valid, by the most clear and unquestionable evidences ; in default of which, it can be considered nought but a deception.

Of these two species of false mysticism, there are many exhibitions in the present day. We doubt whether the whole doctrine of sacramental efficacy, as held by many sincere minds, is not ac-



curately designated as a mysticism of the former kind ; inasmuch as it is all based upon the notion of a spiritual effect being communicated to the mind by an unconscious and objective instrumentality. So entirely foreign is this from the ordinary modes of the divine operation, in the worlds both of matter and of mind, that we need a proof sufficient to attest a miracle itself, to render the doctrine at all credible. With regard to the other species of false mysticism, namely, the pretension to, or belief in, a supernatural inspiration now enjoyed, we suppose it still lingers amongst the ignorant or the enthusiastic, and will only gradually expire, as the province of faith and of feeling in religion becomes gradually more accurately defined. Faith in the supernatural, we may safely say, can never die out of humanity, but will ever remain a standing proof of our connection with a spiritual world. While this, however, is the case, we may well anticipate, that the progress of science, the further investigation of the laws of the human feelings, and the fuller conception of what is included in religious faith, will, ere long, bring the tendency to mysticism into its proper bounds, and curb the extravagance of superstition, without crushing our faith in what is spiritual and divine.

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## CONCLUSION.

THERE is one truth which the whole of our inquiries into the speculative philosophy of the present age is calculated to teach—namely, that the great question of philosophy is that of *method*. Upon the view we take of this one point, must depend nearly the whole influence we exert upon the real progress of human knowledge.

Amidst the vast variety of systems that prevail throughout the world in the present day, we may trace the features of four generic methods, *i. e.* of four grounds of appeal for the certitude of our knowledge. These four methods we may term respectively, the positive principle, the individual principle, the traditional principle, and the eclectic principle.

The positive principle in strictness ought to be regarded, not so much in the light of a philosophical method, as the denial at once

both of method and of philosophy. Instead of attempting the solution of the great problems of human interest, it repels them: instead of grappling with the questions which every thinking mind asks with a trembling earnestness, it chides us for our longings, our aspirations, our holiest hopes. Doubtless, it may claim some degree of definiteness and precision; but it is a definiteness and a precision, which arise from negation, not from solution; it owes its security simply to the fact of its going, like the serpent, upon its belly, and eating only of the dust of the earth. A philosophy that never soars, can certainly claim exemption from the danger of a fall.

We will suppose, however, nay, we will affirm, that there *is* such a thing as truth beyond the limits of the senses: on what then is its certitude grounded? There are two opposite answers; which are given to this question by the philosophies of the age. On the one hand, we are pointed to the *individual reason*, as the absolute source of all scientific truth. Our own consciousness, it is said, must ever be the final appeal. In whatever way truth may come to us, still reason must be the judge of its evidence, and the interpreter of its meaning. Whatever amount of truth may exist objectively, yet to us it can be nothing, until it is grasped subjectively by the understanding. Upon the validity, therefore, of the intellectual faculties, the whole ultimate certitude of truth must rest. Such is the position which the individual principle assumes in the struggle for truth.

Another and opposite system of philosophy answers the question above proposed, in an entirely different manner. The individual reason, it contends, is utterly untrustworthy. A man may ground upon his own subjective convictions any amount of absurdity that can be imagined. Besides this, it is asked, what is the individual reason? A mere nonentity. Every man is but a portion of humanity—a link in the vast chain of being. His belief is not the result of his own individual constitution, but of the influences of the age in which he lives. Man, as an individual, is subject to the grossest delusions; neither at any time can human truth be any other than relative to the state and conditions of the understanding; so that, if we possess absolute knowledge at all, it must come from an objective source. This source is God. In the primitive revelation, in the Divine gift of speech, and in subsequent communications, there has been a direct outpouring of truth from Heaven itself. Here, then, it is said, is the ground of all certainty; here a

species of knowledge, which is altogether raised above the delusions of the individual.

Now, that there is some amount of truth in each of the principles above stated, can be readily admitted. The intimations of sense, for example, though not the sole fountain of knowledge, as the positivist supposes, yet give the primary incentive to all the faculties, and furnish one very important element in our experience. The individual self, again, most assuredly contains the mould through which all the material of our knowledge must pass, ere it can be apprehended and employed—in a word, ere to us it can exist. But the individual self is still a portion of humanity, and can only confirm its own subjective convictions by an appeal to the authority of other minds around it. Hence, then, arises the necessity and the value of eclecticism.

The term eclecticism, we should say, is here employed, *merely* through deficiency of some better and more scientific appellation, and in a sense very different from that of its more general use. We are desirous, therefore, in conclusion, of throwing some light upon it, when viewed as a philosophical method.

Eclecticism, in the sense we employ it, may be described as *the philosophy of progress*. Take any fixed philosophical method, and if it be in itself *complete*, it ought to give a complete result. If all truth, for example, can be eliminated from the individual reason, there is the same possibility of its being completed in one period of the world as in any other, because the individual reason—the *me*—abstractedly viewed, is the same in all ages. If there be *progress* in the development of truth, then there must be some principle out of and beyond the individual, which exerts its influence upon the human mind at large; that is, there must be some element, out of and beyond the individual, on which philosophical truth is partly grounded. The case is the same with regard to the principle of tradition. Here we have a truth, fixed and abiding, in which there can be no question of progress whatever. What has come to us verbally and objectively from above, can neither be further developed nor put into new relations, without admitting another, and that a human principle, by means of which the development takes place. In fact, whatever fixed appeal we may set up as the ground of certitude, it can only hold good on the supposition, that philosophical truth is something fixed and abiding likewise.

History, however, shows us, that in human knowledge—*i. e.* in the compression and application of truth—there is perpetual prog-



ress. There is hardly a single subject, which is viewed exactly in the same light one century that it is the next. The universal field of knowledge being enlarged, all the particular portions of it are thrown continually into new relations.

Regarding philosophy, then, as progressive, what appeal can we have as final—what ground of certitude on which we can fully rely? We answer, that the one final appeal, and the ultimate ground of certitude in philosophy, is HUMANITY. Positivism gives us truth and error; the individual reason gives us truth and error; tradition gives us truth and error; but humanity sifts the results of individual thinking, and hands us down a stream of truth, ever widening as it flows onwards.

The philosophy we advocate, then, is the philosophy of progress; we see a providential plan in the development of society; under this plan, we see the vast edifice of human knowledge gradually perfecting by the laborers who are working upon it in all departments; and the solid material of which the edifice is composed, is *the catholic thinking of mankind*.

Were not the phrase pre-occupied, we might term our philosophy the philosophy of common sense, that is, of the *sensus communis* of humanity. This *sensus communis*, however, is not anything *fixed*, it is not made up of the mass of opinions which are held at any one given period; but embodies that gradual unfolding of great truths and principles, by which the world's thinking rolls forward to compass its mighty results. Only admit that humanity is verily in progress, and it follows at once, that neither the individual nor the common opinion of one given period, can represent the whole cycle of philosophical truth. The fixed method of one period becomes inadequate to the wants of the next, and thus shows us that we require a methodology, which can adapt itself to all the possible phases which knowledge may yet assume.

The method which appears to us best capable of supplying this demand, is that which we have now described, and which we have denominated eclecticism, or the philosophy of human progress. According to this method, the great aim of philosophy from henceforth, must be to accept the light of truth, whencesoever it may flow, to concentrate the rays it sheds around into one focus, and thus to bring the catholic thought of the world, in each succeeding age, into the region of pure idea. It has been well said, that the problem of philosophy is *common sense*. The actual material of which it is composed can be none other than the whole mass of



truth which lies embodied in the thinking of every age ; and to the authority of the age alone can we make our final appeal. The duty of speculative science, is to bring the truth of the age to light ; to clear it of its *dross* and its symbols ; to make it stand forth as plain, reflective, philosophic *knowledge*. Accordingly, the common mind and the individual mind have here each their department ; the one furnishes the matter of our philosophy, the other may give it a form ; the one offers us the truth, so far as it can be at present grasped, spontaneously ; the other reduces this spontaneous apperception to the character of logical science—to philosophy properly so called. Thus, while philosophy will be the last word which every age pronounces, it will furnish the forepost of observation, upon which the more advanced thinkers will stand to look forwards and discern the *dim* forms of the coming futurity. Doubtless the same speculative tendencies will be again and again reproduced, and upon some short-sighted minds may produce the impression that philosophy is confined within one eternal circle, out of which it can never free itself. But the mind which studies humanity aright, will see that its movement is rather that of the spiral, which, though making its perpetual revolutions, is ever tending upwards towards a higher perfection, and pointing to Heaven itself as its final aim.

## APPENDIX.

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### NOTE A.

#### *Philosophy—Theology—Religion.*

THE few passing remarks on the above subjects, inserted in the text, have excited some attention. Several writers have expressed entire concurrence in the views there presented; others, on the contrary, at least to some extent, have questioned their accuracy. Dr. Tholuck, in a notice of the present work, inserted in the "Literarischer Anzeiger," has expressed his wish that the question between faith and science had been more fully elucidated; and Dr. Chalmers, in the North British Review, has reclaimed against our theistic principles, in favor of those contained in his own "natural Theology." Under these circumstances, we need to make no apology for the additional remarks now inserted on a subject of such vast and universal importance. Our simple object in doing so is, to rescue the theology of our age from the weak position which we cannot but feel it has too often assumed, and place it upon a basis that is less assailable by the shafts of scepticism. As the word *philosophy*, when used in connection with religion, is so apt to be misunderstood, we shall for the present lay it entirely aside, and attempt to reduce the question to its simplest terms.

It will be admitted, in the outset, that we have *minds*; that these minds have a given constitution; that by virtue of this constitution we are adapted to perceive certain truths, and to exercise our faculties upon them. The problem, then, to be solved is *this*. How far do we owe our theological belief to the nature of our constitution, and the exercise of our faculties; and how far to a direct objective relation? in other words, What part of the proof both of Theism and of Christianity comes from the one source, and what from the other? Only let us premise, that we leave the question of *Religion* for a little entirely in abeyance, and direct our attention simply to that of *Theology*—that we are not now to search into the origin of our devotional feelings, but simply of our theological ideas and principles.

Now, the whole question of theology must *begin* with the evidences we have of the being of a God: this is the foundation truth on which the whole reposes. Respecting these evidences there are three hypotheses we may assume. 1. That the being of God is purely a truth of revelation. 2. That it is a truth, which rests partly on natural grounds, and partly on revelation; or, 3. That it rests in its last analysis *solely* upon the light of nature. The abettors of the first hypothesis view the human faculties as erring and untrustworthy, and appeal to revelation as the ultimate basis of all fixed and *eternal truth*. Those who accept the second hypothesis, admit the validity of reason on the whole, but consider the aid of revelation necessary to complete the full strength of the theistic argument. Among these, we reckon the eloquent critic of the North British Review. Those who take the last hypothesis, view natural theology as the necessary basis of all revealed truth.

With the first class of these reasoners we have now but little to do. There are very few among those that bear the name of Protestants, who deny the validity of reason altogether. Theologians of this class belong almost exclusively to the Roman Catholic Church, who find it convenient to decry reason, in order to force us into the arms of *tradition*, as the only ground of human certitude. To these, natural theology is a nonentity; it exists not in any form whatever; all human belief is an affair of tradition, handed down from a primitive or some posterior revelation. We may let this theory, then, stand at present *hors de combat*.

We come, then, to the second hypothesis, viz., that the evidence of the being of a God rests upon grounds partly natural and partly revealed. And here an objection arises in the outset, against the hypothesis in question; namely, *that the truth of the*

*Divine existence is absolutely necessary, in order to establish the authority of revelation.* Take the evidences of revelation one by one, and it will be found, that they each and all go upon the presumption of the existence of a God. What are the internal evidences but representations of the fact, that the doctrines of Christianity are all in perfect consistency with the highest conceptions we can form of the Divine character? Leave the existence of God out of the question, or imagine yourself talking to an atheist, and of what use are all the appeals you make to the purity, excellence, and Divine grandeur of the Holy Scriptures? These considerations do not prove the *being of a God*; they only show that on the previous admission of his existence, the sacred writings bear internal marks of coming from his Divine mind.

The case is the same with regard to the external evidences. What is a miracle to a man who has no notion of or belief in a God? If the universe could come by chance or fate, surely any of the lesser phenomena termed miraculous, might occur so too. We do not question, indeed, but that miracles may rouse the moral nature and draw attention to divine truth; but, *logically*, if the whole universe can exist without a maker, miracles cannot prove the contrary. In a word, the whole authority of revelation is derived from the fact of its coming FROM God; consequently, its authority cannot be appealed to as an evidence for the existence of God. To make the credibility of revelation rest upon the authority of God, and the being of God upon the authority of revelation, is as complete an instance of a vicious circle as could well be imagined. If it be said that the whole of the histories of the Old and New Testament exhibit the marks of a Divine hand in connection with the welfare and moral education of man, I admit it. But this proof does not arise from the *authority* of revelation as such, but simply from the historical facts recorded. The religious history of mankind may certainly be used as a branch of the theistic argument; but to argue from the facts of history wherever recorded, is as purely logical a process as to argue from any other facts whatever. The case is the same, when we appeal to the Bible as a witness of the fact that the world had a beginning. If we want to employ this fact as a step in our argument for the being of a God, and against the eternity of the universe, we can only appeal to the Bible as *history*: to appeal to it as authority on this point, supposes the previous knowledge of a divine Being from whom that authority is derived. And thus twist about the evidences of revelation as we may, they cannot prove *that God is*; but are simply adapted to show us that Christianity came from a Being, of whose existence and attributes we have a previous conviction.

Thus, then, we are thrown entirely upon our third hypothesis; namely, that the proof of the Divine existence, in its last analysis, lies entirely within the province of natural theology.

Before we proceed to develop the line of argument we should employ in establishing the existence of God, let us take a passing glance at the nature and purport of natural theology. The aim of natural theology is not to give us the *knowledge*, but to give us the *science* of God. Our knowledge of God as a part of our personal history may come from a variety of sources. We may believe in God from tradition, from the Bible, from our feelings, from many other causes. But natural theology, originating as it does after we have the knowledge of God as a practical belief, seeks to render an account of that knowledge, to justify that belief, to bring the whole matter into the light of scientific or moral truth. To do this, it must construct, as it were, the very *idea* of God: point out *how* it originates in the human mind, and show how far it is objectively valid. It is necessary carefully to guard this distinction. We are often told that we must look out upon the universe, or study the page of revelation, or consult our religious affections, in order to find God. All this may be true, as regards our personal convictions, while yet the real scientific proofs may lie in another direction. Natural theology does not preach, or appeal; it simply *reasons*. It does not aim *directly* at a moral effect, but only at a logical conclusion.

Another point to be carefully attended to is *this*, that we do not start with the supposition, that the *idea* of God is already found and agreed upon. This is an error lying at the threshold of almost all the natural theology which our recent literature has produced. Our writers look around upon the laws and dispositions of matter, and finding there the evidences of *design*, exclaim, lo! here is *God*. True enough, but they had gained their conceptions of God from other sources; they had taken some theistic notions, derived perhaps from the age, or from their own minds, or still more probably from Christianity, and attributed the design manifested in nature to *this Being*. To do so, however, is manifestly an illegitimate and totally illogical process. The problem is, to find God, to deduce the true idea of the Deity, to lay aside all previous *conceptions*, and show how we arise step by step up to Deity itself. When we see design in nature, all we can say is, that there is a designer, or some designers: we are not to seize upon our previous traditional or spontaneous belief, and say we have proved the existence



of God in this particular sense. Natural theology, we repeat, implies a logical procedure; it demands that we take nothing before received for granted, that we lay aside every previous conception, that we render a scientific account of *what* God is as well as a proof of the fact *that* he is. Strictly speaking, indeed, the former process is necessary to the latter; for to prove *that* God is, is proving nothing at all, unless you show the *notion* we have to attach to the term itself. Until this is done, the word *God* may mean fate, or chance, or power, or a mere demiurge.

In this respect, there is an entire want of parallelism between the case, in which, from seeing a watch, we infer some human constructor, and the case, in which, from seeing the universe, we infer a God. In the former instance, we have previous experience of the agent *man*, and at once attribute the work to an agent of this kind: in the latter instance, we have no experience of the agent *God*. We have, therefore, to gain the *conception* of him as well as prove his objective reality. Real parallelism between the two cases would imply a question of this kind. If I were a pure disembodied spirit, and having never known what man was, had to derive my knowledge of him from his works, how much could I deduce respecting his nature from contemplating a watch? I should be obliged, of course, in such a case, to *construct* the conception of such an agent from the qualities of my own mind, to rise from the known to the unknown, from the agency I find in myself to that which I am now called on to suppose in another. So it is also with regard to God. The very proofs which substantiate the divine existence, have also to furnish us with our conceptions of the divine nature: and, consequently, no proofs which do not carry with them the complete type of that divine nature, are competent, *single handed*, to raise our minds to God.

The argument of natural theology, then, is a very complex one. Every part of the creation, external and internal, brings its contribution to it. Instead of attempting to deduce the existence of the Deity from one, and that the very lowest region of observation, namely, the region of matter, we endeavor to build the argument up step by step, employing every species of proof, until it attains a cumulative force, before which the sternest scepticism must be swept away.

First, then, let us look out upon nature. What do we see, gazing on it *outwardly*? The answer is, *mechanism*. As the mechanism of a watch irresistibly suggests a maker, so the mechanism of the universe equally suggests a cause. We do not define yet of what nature the cause is: let it be *fate*, let it be *chance*, let it be anything you please, still it must have been *something*. If a man be found murdered by the way-side, there is no need of beginning the evidence in a court of law, that some one or something must have committed it. So in the case of the world, there is no need of bringing any proof that there has been some *cause* or *causes*, which have brought it into its present state. If it have existed from eternity, the cause or causes must have operated from eternity. Even those who speak of fate, as their God, must mean, that *something*, *i. e.* some power or other, is signified under the word *fate*. The only thing we have to do is to examine the *effect*, and see if from it we can learn anything respecting the cause. Now, the moment we come to ask respecting this cause *qualis sit*, we begin necessarily to argue from the only instance of direct efficient causation with which we are acquainted, namely, from our own minds. And probably the most immediate idea which men unschooled in reflection, and accustomed simply to converse with nature, would form of the world's cause, is that of a being like themselves, or more probably of a hierarchy of human Deities. No one will affirm, that the earlier ages of the world were destitute of any searchings after God. So far from that, everything in the mythical period was wondrously gilded with the divine. The only thing to be noticed is, that men in those ages conversed mainly with nature; that they formed their conceptions of the *numina divina* without much reflection, and chiefly from nature; and that the argument from this source resulted more commonly than not in polytheism. Can we say that the process was illogical? I think not. Confine our view to nature only with its endless variations, and what is there unnatural in admitting the whole hierarchy of Olympus? Nay, history and present experience prove, that under such circumstances the polytheistic hypothesis is by far the most acceptable to the human understanding. Even on this ground, however, the chief share in the argument is derived from the mind or the consciousness. The irresistible belief we have of causation is a primary law of our consciousness, and the first attempt we make to hypostatize the cause of the universe around us, is the transference of our own forms of intelligence and our own personality into the conception of that vast architect, or hierarchy of architects, by whom the world was constructed. The theistic argument, then, in which the appeal to nature is the prominent feature, ends at best in the idea of a *Δημιουργος*.

But, now, we enter upon another process of reflection. The universe presents to our view innumerable objects, which are finite, changeable, and dependent. All of



them consist of certain forms and attributes, united to a substance or substratum. But substance, in its finite and dependent form, cannot be self-existent; for it has come into that form from a previous state, *i. e.* has been brought into it by a prior cause. Go backwards accordingly in the chain of causes, and you come at last to an absolute cause. There must be, therefore, something previous to finite existence which we call *Being per se*, something which is self-existent, underived, absolute, eternal. Under all the fleeting appearances which nature presents, there is something *abiding*, which reposes alike at the basis of all—a Being which passes not away with her changes. Here, then, is the dawn of the *infinite*, upon the human mind—an idea which is soon reproduced in numberless different forms. Think of *space*;—we see it stretching out beyond the world, beyond our system, beyond the furthest limits of creation; and every bound we affix to it only carries us to the unbounded beyond. Think of *time*;—all the limits of duration do but suggest the illimitable eternity. Think of dependent existence;—and we sink lower and lower from one stage of dependence to another, till we rest only in the independent, the absolute. Think of *finite being*;—what is it but an endless paradox without infinite being? Think of *cause*;—what does it end in, but the *causa causarum*, the spring and source of all things. The idea of the infinite is necessary, absolutely necessary, to perfect the full conception of God. But this idea comes not from without. We can never see, we can never have any experience of *infinite being*, and yet this is a *positive* idea, an idea of which we feel the reality and necessity; yea, without which, all being were but a paradox. The *finite* is really the negative idea: it only comprehends limitation and negation, a limitation which is universal within the regions of our sensuous knowledge. But reason, taking its start from the finite, brings us infallibly to the infinite; and inasmuch as two infinities involve a contradiction, it finds here the proof of the *unity* and the *eternity* of the first great cause.

Nature, then, gave us a demiurge for a Deity: reflection now asserts his unity, infinity, and eternity; and we have thus before us the *absolute Being*, without which all thought, all creation, all nature, would be involved in one inexplicable contradiction. As polytheism was the prevailing sentiment under the former conception, so pantheism appears to be on the whole the prevailing result of the second or metaphysical standpoint. But if there be any such thing as truth at all, if there be any common principles on which the human reason can rest, then assuredly the universe has a ground, or cause, and that cause is self-existent, absolute, infinite, eternal.

But again, we rise into another region of proof, and that is the *moral*. The only *personality* of which we have any direct knowledge, is that of our own minds. We must take mind therefore as a field of observation, as a created effect, and see what we can learn from this effect of the infinite cause. Humanity is not *self-created*. The reason we possess is not constructed by us out of a state of unreason. If, therefore, it is implanted in us, then the being who implanted it, the creator of the spirit, must *himself* possess reason. So it is with our moral sentiments. If there is a law of right and wrong engraven upon our constitution, there must have been a lawgiver. All the appeals of innocence against unrighteous force are appeals to an eternal justice, and all the visions of moral purity are glimpses of the infinite excellence. In a word, if we see in nature, in mind, in history, if we see in every region of the divine operation, intelligence adapting means to an end; if we see moral sanctions expressed and implied in the natural tendencies of human action; if we see all this moreover effected by a supreme intelligent power, that is, a divine will; then from the conceptions we have of intelligence, moral sentiments, and will, as existing in our own personality, we are constrained to regard the being from whom they all flowed as himself a personality, in which all these attributes exist in their fullness and perfection. And then, at length, when we have once attained the idea of a divine personality, we may go back again through all the realms of nature and existence, and gather new delight from the infinite illustrations of power, wisdom, and goodness, which they perpetually show forth. Thus it is, that the teleological, the ontological, and the moral arguments, blend in one, and mutually support each other. To extort from nature alone, a complete proof of the divine personality, is throwing ourselves into a false position, and weakening our argument by making it prove too much. That nature has a cause, every one who speaks intelligibly must admit. The main object of the ontological argument, is to prove that this cause is infinite, self-existent, *one*; while that of the moral is to prove that he is intelligent, holy, free.

Having arrived at this point, we have wherewithal to ground our belief in the authority of revelation. The internal and external evidences can now both appeal to the power and purity of the Divinity; and then, its claim to the title of a divine message being once established, revelation can carry us onwards in our conceptions of the divine nature, to a still loftier elevation. Thus revelation, while useless at the basis, may yet become the crowning piece of our natural theology. Give it but a pedestal to rest

upon, and it may lead us into the loftiest regions of divine knowledge, which are accessible to humanity in its earthly state. Such is the brief outline of what we regard to be the true nature of the theistic argument.

We were required to point out the region in which the whole argument is best concentrated, we should refer to *man*, as himself a living embodiment of all the evidences. If you want argument from design, then you see in the human frame the most perfect of all known organization. If you want the argument from *being*, then man, in his conscious dependence, has the clearest conviction of that independent and absolute *one*, on which his own being reposes. If you want the argument from reason and morals, then the human mind is the only known repository of both. Man is, in fact, a microcosm—a universe in himself; and whatever proof the whole universe affords, is involved *in principle*, in man himself. With the *image* of God before us, who can doubt of the divine type?

Having proceeded thus far with our theistic principles, we may attempt now some few further adjustments with the "Natural Theology" of the "North British Review." The eloquent author of the critique before referred to, handles with some severity the principle of Cousin—that we must find the infinite, the absolute, the self-existent one in the depths of our own consciousness; and quotes against him his own previous principle of pure spontaneous apperception, as being contradictory to it. "Pure spontaneous reason receives its light direct from heaven; it looks up, and the beams of eternal truth, in its objective reality, fall clear and unsullied upon it. This being the case," says the reviewer, "why should we seek for God in the depths of our own psychology: how can the reflection be brighter than the primary effulgence?"

I confess it was somewhat surprising to me, that so able a metaphysician, in making this objection, should have entirely overlooked the distinction between our primary and spontaneous knowledge of God, and theology which is the science of God. Surely we do not require natural theology, as a science, to give us our first conceptions of the Deity. I might, if this were the case, with the same reasonableness, inquire whether the reviewer himself could find the infinite and absolute being among the eyes and claws of animals, or the fossil remains of the lower geological strata, or any other of the regions of nature, which he traverses in search of the teleological dispositions of matter. What we are required to do in natural theology, is to render a *scientific account* of our belief in a God; and the question here, accordingly, is not *whence* we have the first spontaneous glimpse of the Divinity, but how we can establish the truth of his existence on a clear and *reflective* basis. Our reviewer, we apprehend, traverses nature, not to find God, but in order to render a scientific account of his belief; we traverse the regions of psychology for the same purpose.

To render this account, the spontaneous apperceptions of the mind, *reviewed alone*, are useless: they can have no scientific value about them, just because they are spontaneous and not reflective. The use of psychology is to give them a *reflective* value; to prove that they are not mere subjective delusions, but a veritable light from heaven. This is, in fact, the very point which M. Cousin is establishing in the passage quoted, and, alas! misunderstood by the reviewer, when he (M. Cousin) says, that "within the penetralia of consciousness he had succeeded in seizing and analyzing the instantaneous but veritable fact of the spontaneous apperception of truth—an apperception which, not immediately reflecting itself, passes unperceived in the depths of the consciousness, yet is the real basis of that, which later, under a logical form, and in the hands of reflection, becomes a necessary conception."

Theology, as the very termination *ology* implies, occupies itself solely in the reflex and logical; and it is for this reason we affirm, that we must seek for its basis in the depths of our psychology. Take the instance of beauty, as an illustration. We have a spontaneous apperception of the beautiful in nature or art. To find the beautiful, of course, we need no psychology; but is it possible for us to ground the theory or science of beauty, except upon the basis of psychological principles? So is it in natural theology:—to establish the principle of causation, upon which the whole *a posteriori* argument depends, is an affair of psychology; to find the scientific use and value of our pure spontaneous apperceptions, is an affair of psychology; to furnish the logical explanation of the manner in which we rise from the idea of our own personality, to that of the infinite personality, is an affair of psychology; in a word, take away psychology, and although we may feel the presence of the Infinite Being, and love him still, yet we can have no theology, no scientific basis for our belief. Nature alone can never give us the infinite; and how are we, therefore, to ascribe infinity to the Deity, unless we show, *philosophically*, that our spontaneous perception of the infinite is grounded in real scientific truth.

This leads us to another very important adjustment, on the relation between natural theology and revelation. It is evident, that we may assume our spontaneous concep-



tions of Deity as unquestionable, and be content to go with them to the establishment of the evidences of revealed religion. In this case, our system of revealed theology may undoubtedly *appear* to stand apart from, and independent of, the conclusions of natural theology. But who does not at once perceive, that in this process there is an entire want of logical consecutiveness? We take an unscientific formula, and upon that we ground a scientific argument for the truth of revelation. We accept a mere spontaneous impression, and on its authority we ground a theology, *i. e.* a reflective science. That the spontaneous and unscientific apprehension of truth is the original *matter* on which the whole of our theology must be based (just as our perception of the beautiful is the basis of all our scientific æsthetics), we fully admit; but we have no right to use it for scientific purposes, until it has become *reflective* truth. If we pretend to construct a theology at all, we must proceed logically, from the very first principles to the summit of our last conclusion.

On this ground, therefore, we affirm, in the name of all clear and consecutive thinking, that natural theology is the true and the only true basis of revealed theology. To build the authority of revelation upon the idea of God, as furnished by the spontaneous light alone, may serve well enough for moral purposes; nay, for aught I know, we might convert the whole world to Christianity, without proving a single doctrine it contains, or even vindicating the truth of its evidences. But if we aspire to a *theology*, the logical procedure cannot for a moment be dispensed with: we must prove our ground as we advance, and leave nothing behind, which can give occasion of offence to the sceptic himself. To do this, we are bound to begin by rendering a due account of our spontaneous apprehensions, of our doctrine of final causes, or of any other principle upon which man is compelled to admit the validity of his primary beliefs. Accordingly, we must establish the philosophical value of our primary theistic conceptions by the light of a searching *psychology*: and it is only when we have laid firm our basis in the inviolable depths of the human consciousness, that we can proceed to build up the noble superstructure of a *sound theology*. Unless these principles be established, theism fails of a scientific foundation; and theism thus failing, natural theology has not its primary idea, and revealed theology is wanting in the very conception which gives it all its authority and all its power. We affirm, therefore, that all theology, whether natural or revealed, like everything else which appeals to *argument* for vindicating its truth, must be grounded in the *data* of our consciousness, and the exercise of our faculties. To deny this, is to deny the right of appeal to the human understanding in such matters at all; it is to sacrifice the very idea of having a rational basis for our religious belief; it is to give up the possibility of a theology properly so-called, and set the whole of our theological conceptions afloat upon the uncertain ocean of mere feeling, or of human tradition.

This conclusion is evident, not only when we turn our attention to the conception of a God as the *foundation* of all theology, but equally so when we consider many other of the conceptions which the truths of revelation involve. Revelation comes to us in the form of *words*; these words, in order to convey to us their *full* meaning, must be *fully* understood. But how can this full understanding be attained? Experience alone is sufficient to tell us that the ideas which are embodied in many of the words and expressions of revelation, can only be adequately comprehended, by means of the progress we make in moral thinking at large. Will any one say that the scriptural idea of human brotherhood has been comprehended through the eighteen centuries of Christian teaching which have enlightened the world? As society advances, and the principles of justice between man and man become gradually established, do we not find that the whole is contained in the spirit, aye, and in the letter of Christianity, but that the moral thinking of the world was not sufficiently awake to see it? Fifty years ago, did our fathers see slavery cursed in the Bible? Or ten years ago, would any one have dreamed of quoting scripture against the spirit of monopoly? So it is with all the other great subjects of moral interest. The idea of creation, of providence, of human freedom, or of moral evil, of retribution, aye, and of spiritual regeneration, all of them involve *conceptions*, which can only be evolved into highest brightness by the intense application of the *reason* upon them; that is, by the co-operation of *philosophy* in the elucidation of divine truth. We find, then, two important relationships which philosophy bears to theology; first, that it must afford it a scientific basis: and secondly, that it must clear up to us the great primary moral conceptions which revelation involves, but which it leaves us to investigate and develop.

Are we then, it might be said, to regard philosophy as the basis of all *religion*? I answer, far from it. Theology and religion are two widely different things. Theology implies a body of truth, founded upon indisputable principles, and having a connection capable of carrying our reason with it, running through all its parts. Religion, on the other hand, is the spontaneous homage of our nature poured forth with all the

fragrance of holy feeling into the bosom of the infinite. Religion may exist without a theology at all, properly so called. We may never have attempted to render account of a single theological idea; we may never have stepped out of the region of our purely spontaneous imaginations; we may be destitute of the least notion of the grounds on which our belief rests, and yet the deepest waters of our religious being may be stirred by the divine impulse upon the soul, and lead to all the noble results of a living and entire devotion to God. And here we see the power of the *word* in its progress through the world. It comes not with any philosophical pretensions, it claims not to show us the grounds of our belief in God and Eternity; but it comes, all replete with the pure, the holy, the divine. It appeals not to our logical consciousness, but speaks at once to the religious nature, or, as we more often term it, to the *heart*. Scepticism existing, as it ever will, till the visions of prophecy are fulfilled, demands at our hands a *theology* which shall stop the mouth of sophistry and contention: but, ah! the world at large, grovelling in the dust of the earthly, the sensual, and the devilish, needs not so much a theology, as the deep inward stirrings of that religious nature, which every bosom contains as the heritage of heaven, until the spirit is mastered by the flesh, and the better feelings hurried away and lost in the torrent of imperious and irresistible evil.

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Since the above note was written, the spirit that dictated the sentiments on which we have commented, has gone to its eternal rest. It may be interesting to some of the survivors, to know that the views above expressed were communicated to him, though in a very brief and imperfect form, by private correspondence, and that his mind to the last was actively engaged in developing the principles of the knowledge we may attain of that Divine being, whom he was so soon to adore in the higher world, and on whose eternal love he is now reposing. The following is an extract from his reply, dated April 30, 1847:—

“I should have replied much sooner, but I have been much engrossed, and often unwell. I read your letter with the greatest satisfaction. I must confess that if you once admit the reality of the conception of a God, and also that the proof subsequent to that point is successful, it is all I care for. I do not in the least object to the speculation as to the origin of the conception. Enough for me that the starting post is there, however it may have been set up. You will allow with me, that the conception is a very general one; and if an unexceptionable argument can be grounded on its mere existence for the objective reality of a God, I seek no further. I would lay no interdict on the attempt to trace our mental processes backward from the conception to its earlier rudiments. But this anterior process, or rather the description of it, forms no part of the proof for a God, which is grounded exclusively on the existence of this conception as a mental phenomenon, and not on the causes whence it took its rise.” Great as is the loss to private friendships and affection of so noble a mind and so loving a nature as was that of Chalmers, greater still is that which has been sustained by the Church and by the world. Breathing as he had ever done the atmosphere of his country’s philosophy and theology, our admiration was only so much the greater to see his soaring mind ever ready to burst beyond the limits of mere nationality, into the broad catholicity of human thought. Too soon is he removed from a sphere in which his influence was at once so extensive and so deeply needed. Had another ten years been added to his life, with all the fresh associations which were flowing in upon it from the literature of Europe, with that lofty impartiality which more and more characterized his spirit, with the aptitude he evinced to soar beyond the formalities of a dead symbol into the higher regions of spiritual light and life, we can hardly picture to ourselves the full dimensions to which his whole mental being might have expanded. May there be many to catch the mantle of the ascending prophet—the mantle not only of his massive intellect, but of his broad, his earnest, and his catholic spirit!

#### NOTE B.

M. Peisse, an ingenious French author, in confuting the intellectual system of Dr. Gall, puts the whole question of the *uniform* relation between the cerebral development and the power of the mental faculties to the test, by adducing the instance of a young Indian girl, who possessed a most monstrous configuration, but who never showed



mentally the least peculiarity. After having attested and described the facts of the case, he proceeds to reason with the phrenologists as follows:—"I do not see how, on your principles, this difficulty can be surmounted. You would not be able to believe, on the one hand, that a sound intellect could dwell in a brain so monstrously deformed, without abandoning your fundamental principle, which expressly subordinates the mental manifestation to certain physiological conditions, determined by yourselves. You are not able, on the other hand, to allege that the malformations of the cranium have not had any influence upon the constitution of the brain, without taking away from your own system its one and only basis, its only guarantee, its only demonstration, namely, *cranoscopy*. If, in fact, you agree that in this case disease or original disposition have produced such considerable deviations upon the cranium, without the brain participating in it, then all your classifications, distinctions, and localizations, are destroyed; for they rest upon a prior supposition of the perfect and continuous correspondence of the cranium with the brain. What would then become of all your observations on the statues of the ancients—upon the heads of living men and animals—if this correspondence does not exist, at least, within the limits which you have determined? \* \* \* The fact which I now discuss is in direct contradiction with your principles, for it demonstrates the one or the other of these two propositions:—

1. "Either, that the integrity of the intellectual and moral faculties can subsist with a monstrous brain; or,

2. "That the cranium can be monstrous without the brain participating in its deformation.

"And you cannot admit either the one or the other, without reducing to a nonentity all the organology of Dr. Gall."

### NOTE C.

The philosophy of M. Azais may be in some measure comprehended from the following extract:—

"The universe is the whole sum of existences and of their relation; these existences and their relations change and unceasingly renew themselves: *action* is then necessary to the existence, and to the preservation of the universe.

"Matter, the substance of beings, is the passive subject of the universal action. God impresses the action—matter obeys.

"The universal action has received from the Creator one unique mode of exercise: on this condition only, it can be a source of order and at the same time production. *Expansion* is the only mode of universal action; that is to say, that every material being by the simple fact, that it exists, is penetrated in all the points of its substance with an inward action, which tends incessantly to dilate it, to divide it, to augment indefinitely the space which it occupies, and, consequently, to dissolve it.

"Thus, a material being, of any kind whatever, if it could for a single moment be alone in space; if, during one moment, it could form of itself a universe; would only have need of this moment to enter into an eternal and absolute dissolution.

"But every material being, of whatever kind, and occupying whatever space, is surrounded with material beings, like to, or different from, itself; which are all likewise penetrated with a continual expansive force; which, consequently, repress or prevent its dissolution, by struggling against it; and the expansion of every one of these bodies is itself repressed, retarded, and modified by the concurrent expansion of all the bodies with which it is surrounded; so that *generally*, in the universe, the act of repression or of conservation is the immediate effect of universal expansion."

The author next goes on to account, upon these mechanical principles, for the phenomena of heat, magnetism, electricity, and all the more subtle agents in nature. From thence he proceeds to deduce all the different attributes of material existence in its solid, liquid, and æriform character. The phenomenon of *elasticity* is peculiarly important in his theory, as accounting for the vibrations by which sound, light, &c., are produced. Without dwelling upon these points, however, we must show his explanation of the principle of organized life.

"Organized beings are elastic beings, in the bosom of which vibrating globules are especially collected in particular focuses; having relations between them sustained by the aid of fibres or channels; this provision does not exist in *unorganized* elastic beings: their vibrating expansion proceeds indifferently from every point towards the surface.

"In plants, the organic relations are very simple, because the channels which estab-

lish them do not fold back upon themselves and have no connection with one another: there is, in a word, no *circulation*. In animals, the organization is so much the more elevated, as the circulation of the vibrating globules is more multiplied, and by this means the general correspondence more rapid and more intimate. Man is the most perfect of organized beings. Every organ, or focus of vibration, in an organized being, of whatever nature, executes its particular vibration: there is *health* or *harmony* in the whole of this being, when all the organs execute concordant vibrations among themselves, when they form a true *concert*. There is, on the contrary, disease when the vibrations of the different organs are discordant among them: in organized beings of the superior classes this discordance manifests itself by *fever*."

Having explained the phenomena of organization, our author proceeds to philosophize upon man, in his mental, moral, and social capacities. "Man," he remarks, "experiences both a want and a repression alike; but of a much more multiplied character, because it is of a nature much more rich, much more lofty. Each one of us is desirous of prosperity, of well-being, of extension, of pleasure, of renown; each can only rest satisfied and peaceful, inasmuch as he moderates the expansion which animates him: if he abandons himself to his ardor, he soon meets with the resistance of his fellows—a resistance which proceeds from *their* expansion, and which, if it is repulsed with violence, rallies, becomes in its turn hostile, rude, oppressive. Human laws, of whatever kind—the laws of administration, the laws of justice, never do anything but regulate the reaction of the common expansion against the usurpations of individual expansion: every human law is a social form given to the single and universal law, to the law of compensations.

"In fine, every people is a federation of expansive beings; a federation which unceasingly tends to the improvement and to the increase of posterity, of territory, of celebrity, of all kinds of enjoyment. This expansion, as long as it is limited by wisdom, remains a principle of force and of harmony; but, favored by imprudence and heated by ambition, it excites the reaction of surrounding peoples; it provokes their union and energy. People, ambitious without moderation, only call forth catastrophes. The earth has resounded with the violence of their movements; soon it is frightened at the noise of its fall: if it is not raised by a firm and conciliatory hand, it is crushed and annihilated."

### NOTE D.

Most of Fichte's works consist of somewhat small treatises; in which his thoughts, however, are developed at once with great brevity and great distinctness. The following, we believe, is a correct list of them, with the exception of short pieces or articles which appeared in the periodical literature of the day:—

1. "An Attempt at a Critique of all Revelation;" published anonymously in 1792, and, then, generally attributed to the pen of Kant.

2. "Lectures on the Destination of the Learned;" written on his first appointment at Jena—1794.

3. "On the Idea of a Doctrine of Science." Weimar, 1794.

4. "Principles of a Universal Doctrine of Science." Weimar, 1794.

5. "Sketch of the Peculiarity of the Doctrine of Science." Jena, 1795.

6. "Principles of Natural Right." Jena, 1796.

7. "A System of Moral Philosophy." Jena, 1798.

These are the works in which Fichte's first views on the subjective philosophy were embodied. From this point, we find a somewhat modified spirit introduced into all his speculations, as we have indicated in the text.

8. "On the Destination of Man." Berlin, 1800. Recently translated into English by Mrs. Percy Sinnett.

9. "Sun-clear Intelligence, offered to the Public at large, on the peculiar Nature of the newest Philosophy." Berlin, 1801.

10. "The Features of the present Age." Berlin, 1884.

11. "On the Nature of the Scholar." Lectures delivered at Erlangen in 1805. Also translated.

12. "Directions for a Happy Life; or, the Doctrine of Religion." Berlin, 1806.

13. "Addresses to the German People." Berlin, 1808.

The following were published posthumously:—

14. "On the Facts of Consciousness." Stuttgart, 1817.

15. "Doctrine of Government." Berlin, 1820.

16. Three volumes of Miscellanies, edited by his son.

Several small controversial pamphlets are here omitted. The above list contains the works which show the development of his philosophical ideas.

The most distinctive feature, and far the most interesting of Fichte's philosophy, is that which refers to man's moral action, and high destiny in life. However extravagant we may consider his theoretical science, yet it is impossible to read his noble sentiments on human duty, and to see them exemplified in his own eventful life, without feeling our moral weakness reproved, and our moral strength invigorated.

### NOTE E.

To give anything approaching to a correct list of all Schelling's writings, is a matter of no small difficulty. His ever restless mind continued, for some years, to pour forth its productions, in treatises, pamphlets, and journals, in such a manner, that the only possible way of getting a connected view of his literary life, would be to arrange these articles in due order, as they appeared before the public. Instead of doing this, we shall give a classification of his writings, according to their general characteristics.

The first period in Schelling's philosophical life, is that in which he discusses the grounds of metaphysical science, as seen from Fichte's subjective principles. To this period belong his articles:—

1. "On the Possibility of a Form of Philosophy generally." Tübingen, 1795; and
2. "On the *Me*, as Principle of Philosophy; or on the Unconditioned in Human Knowledge."
3. "Philosophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism," in "Niethammer's Phil. Journal," 1796.

The second period is that in which Schelling developed his *Natur-Philosophie* in its original form. The chief works belonging to this period are—

1. "Ideas towards a Philosophy of Nature." Leipsic, 1797.
2. "On the Soul of the World; an Hypothesis of the Higher Physics." Hamburg, 1798.
3. "Sketch of a System of Natural Philosophy." Jena, 1799.
4. "System of Transcendental Idealism." Tübingen, 1800.
5. "The Journal for Speculative Physics." Jena, 1800—1803.
6. "Bruno; a Dialogue on the Divine and Natural Principle of Things." Berlin, 1802.
7. "Lectures on the Method of Academical Study." Tübingen, 1803.

In the third period of his philosophical life, Schelling began to feel that he had confined himself too much to the objective point of view, and lost sight of the powers and freedom of the individual *self*. We find, therefore, in the following works, a tendency backward to the subjective principle. These are—

1. "Philosophy and Religion." Tübingen, 1804.
2. "Representation of the true Relation of Natural Philosophy to the improved Doctrine of Fichte." Tübingen, 1806.
3. "Yearly Journal of Medicine." Tübingen, 1806.
4. "Memorial of the Work of Jacobi on Divine Things." Tübingen, 1812.

The last period of Schelling's life, is that in which he has come round to the Theosophic point of view, and merged his former ideas in a comprehensive system of religious mysticism. To this belong—

1. "Researches into the Essence of Human Freedom." Tübingen, 1812.
2. "The Philosophy of Mythology;" in a work on "The Deities of Samothrace." Tübingen, 1815.
3. "Preface to Cousin's Philosophical Fragments." The only thing which the Author wrote, after his work on Mythology, for twenty years.
4. His Lectures at Berlin, in the year 1842, on the "Philosophy of Revelation," of which a few only have been printed.

### NOTE F.

The writings of Hegel are comprised in a much smaller number of independent works, than those of Fichte and Schelling. We have to thank the zeal of his followers in Berlin, for giving us a complete edition of them, edited in a most masterly style. His publications appeared in the following order:—



1. A Dissertation "De Orbitis Planetarum." Jena, 1801.
  2. A small work, "On the Difference between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy." Jena, 1801.
  3. Many Articles in the "Critical Journal of Philosophy." 1802, 1803.
- Up to this period, Hegel was not distinguished from the ordinary school of Schelling, but worked in conjunction with him.
4. The first work, in which he decidedly took up his own independent position, was that entitled "Phenomenology of Mind." Würzburg, 1807. (This work Hegel used to call his "Voyage of Discovery.")
  5. "Science of Logic." This is comprised in three volumes, which appeared successively, from 1812 to 1816, at Nuremberg.
  6. "Encyclopædia of Philosophical Sciences." Heidelberg, 1817.
  7. "Principles of the Rights of Nature." Berlin, 1821.

In addition to these, Hegel delivered many courses of Lectures at Berlin, on almost every subject connected with philosophy and its history, many of which have been published posthumously, from a collation of his own Notes with those taken by his pupils, at their delivery. The most interesting of these are, the "History of Philosophy," and the "Philosophy of History."

### NOTE G.

The following is the statement which has been given by the authors of the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Philosophiques," of the principles by which their criticisms have been guided.

1. Retaining as we do, to the bottom of our hearts, an inviolable respect for that tutelary power, which accompanies man from the cradle to the grave, speaking to him always of God, and pointing him to heaven as the true country; we believe, nevertheless, that philosophy and religion are two things altogether distinct, the one of which cannot supply the place of the other, but which are both necessary to the satisfaction of the mind, and the dignity of our race. We believe that philosophy is a science altogether *free*; which is sufficient in itself, and appeals to reason. But we maintain that, at the same time, far from being an individual and sterile faculty, varying from one man and from one period to another, reason comes from God; that it is, like Him, invariable, and absolute in its essence; that it is nothing less than a reflex of the Divine wisdom, enlightening the consciousness of every individual man, enlightening the tribes of humanity as a whole, under the condition of labor and of time.

2. We recognize no science without method. But the method which we have adopted, and which we regard as the only legitimate one, is that which has already twice regenerated philosophy, and through philosophy the whole sum of human knowledge. It is the method of Socrates and Descartes, but applied with more rigor, and developed to the present proportions of science, the horizon of which has widened with the ages. Equally removed from empiricism, which will admit nothing beyond the grossest and most palpable facts, and from pure speculation, which feeds upon chimeras, the psychological method observes religiously, by the aid of that interior light which is called consciousness, all the facts and all the states of the human mind. It collects one by one all the principles, all the ideas, which constitute, in any manner, the foundation of our intelligence; then, by the aid of induction and reasoning, it fructifies them, and raises them to the highest unity, and develops them into abundant results.

3. Thanks to this manner of proceeding, and thanks to it alone, we teach in psychology the most positive spiritualism, allying the system of Leibnitz to that of Plato and Descartes; not admitting that the mind is an idea, a pure thought, nor a power without liberty, destined simply to put into play the machinery of the body; nor any fugitive form of being in general, which, once broken, only leaves after it an existence unknown to itself, an immortality without consciousness, and without memory. It is in our eyes, that which it is in reality—a free and responsible power, an existence entirely distinct from every other, which possesses itself, knows itself, governs itself, and carries in itself, with the impress of its origin, the pledge of its immortality.

4. In morals we recognize no transaction between passion and duty; between eternal justice and necessity, that is to say, the interest of the moment. The idea of duty, of good in itself, is for us the sovereign law, which allows no attain, and rejects all condition; which binds states and governments, as well as individuals, and ought to serve for a rule in the appreciation of the past, as in the resolutions of the future. But we believe, at the same time, that under the empire of this Divine law, of which



charity and the love of God are the indispensable compliment, all the wants of our nature find their legitimate satisfaction; all the faculties of our being are excited to develop themselves in the most perfect agreement; all the forces of the individual and of society, being combined under one and the same discipline, are equally put out to profit, we will not say for the attainment of absolute happiness, which belongs not to this world, but for the glory and dignity of the human race.

5. In all questions relative to God, and the relations of God to man, we have given its due part to *feeling*; we have recognized, more perhaps than any of our predecessors, its legitimate and salutary influence, even while maintaining, in their whole extent, the rights and the authority of reason. We accord to reason the power of demonstrating to us the existence of the Creator, of instructing us in his infinite attributes, and his relation to the universe of Beings; but by feeling we enter, in some way, into more intimate communion with him, and his action upon us is at once more immediate and more present. We profess an equal separation from mysticism, which, sacrificing reason to feeling, and man to God, loses itself in the splendors of the infinite; and from pantheism, which refuses to God the very perfections of man, by admitting under this name some mere abstract being deprived of consciousness and of liberty. Thanks to this consciousness of ourselves, and of this free-will, upon which are founded at once our method and our entire philosophy, this abstract and vague Deity, of whom we have just spoken, the God of pantheism, becomes forever impossible, and we see in its place *Providence*, the free and holy God, whom the human race adores, the legislator of the moral world, the source at the same time, as it is, the object of that inexhaustible love of the beautiful and the good, which at the centre of our souls mix themselves with the passions of another order.

6. In fine, we think that the history of philosophy is inseparable from philosophy itself; that they both form one and the same science. All the problems agitated by the philosophers, all the solutions which have been given of them, all the systems which in turn have reigned, or have struggled for the mastery in the same epoch, are, in a certain manner of viewing them, facts that have their origin in the human consciousness, facts that illustrate and complete those which every one of us discovers in himself: for how could they have produced themselves, if they had not had in us (in the laws of our intelligence) their foundation and their origin? Independently of this point of view, which regards the history of philosophy as a counterproof, and necessary compliment of psychology, we admit that truth belongs to all times and to all places, that it constitutes in some sort the very essence of the human mind, but that it does not always manifest itself under the same form, and to the same degree. We believe, in fine, in a wise progress, compatible with the invariable principles of reason, and from that cause the present state of science attaches itself closely with the past; the order in which the systems of philosophy follow and unite with each other, becomes the very order which presides over the development of the human intelligence athwart the ages, and throughout the entireness of humanity.

## NOTE H.

In the course of our "Historical View," we have said nothing respecting the philosophy of any of the European nations beyond England, France, and Germany. It should not be inferred, however, from hence, that philosophy has been entirely neglected amongst all the other peoples of Europe except those three. The reason why they hold no prominent place in the history of philosophy is—that they have attached themselves to some of the systems we have explained, rather than originated in any new methods or theories.

Next to the countries above mentioned, Italy has been the most active in the pursuit of philosophy. The merits of Vico, as father of the philosophy of history, have been already mentioned. Besides Vico, however, the last century gave to Italy several writers, more peculiarly philosophical, who are worthy to stand side by side with those of the other countries of Europe. Of these Antonio Genovesi has been termed the restorer of philosophy to Italy. Appiano Buonafede, born four years later, (1716,) was an equally fertile, though very opposite writer. The former may be regarded as belonging to the eclectic, certainly to the spiritualist school, while his opponent was a champion of the sensationalism of the eighteenth century. In morals the name of Muratori has almost an European reputation.

In the present century we have Romagnosi as the historian of philosophy, Galluppi as the psychologist, and Gioberti as the metaphysician; so that every branch of phil-

osophical science has had its representative in Italy. In the person of the latter of these especially, the spirit of philosophy has begun to menace the power both of superstition and of authority, under which that unhappy country has for so long been oppressed.

In Holland, Denmark, and Sweden, several authors have been incited to metaphysical investigations by the German philosophy; and even Portugal has produced one or two works worthy of notice. As all these, however, have a reference to some of the systems already explained, I have not thought it worth while to get up any distinct account of them in the present volumes.

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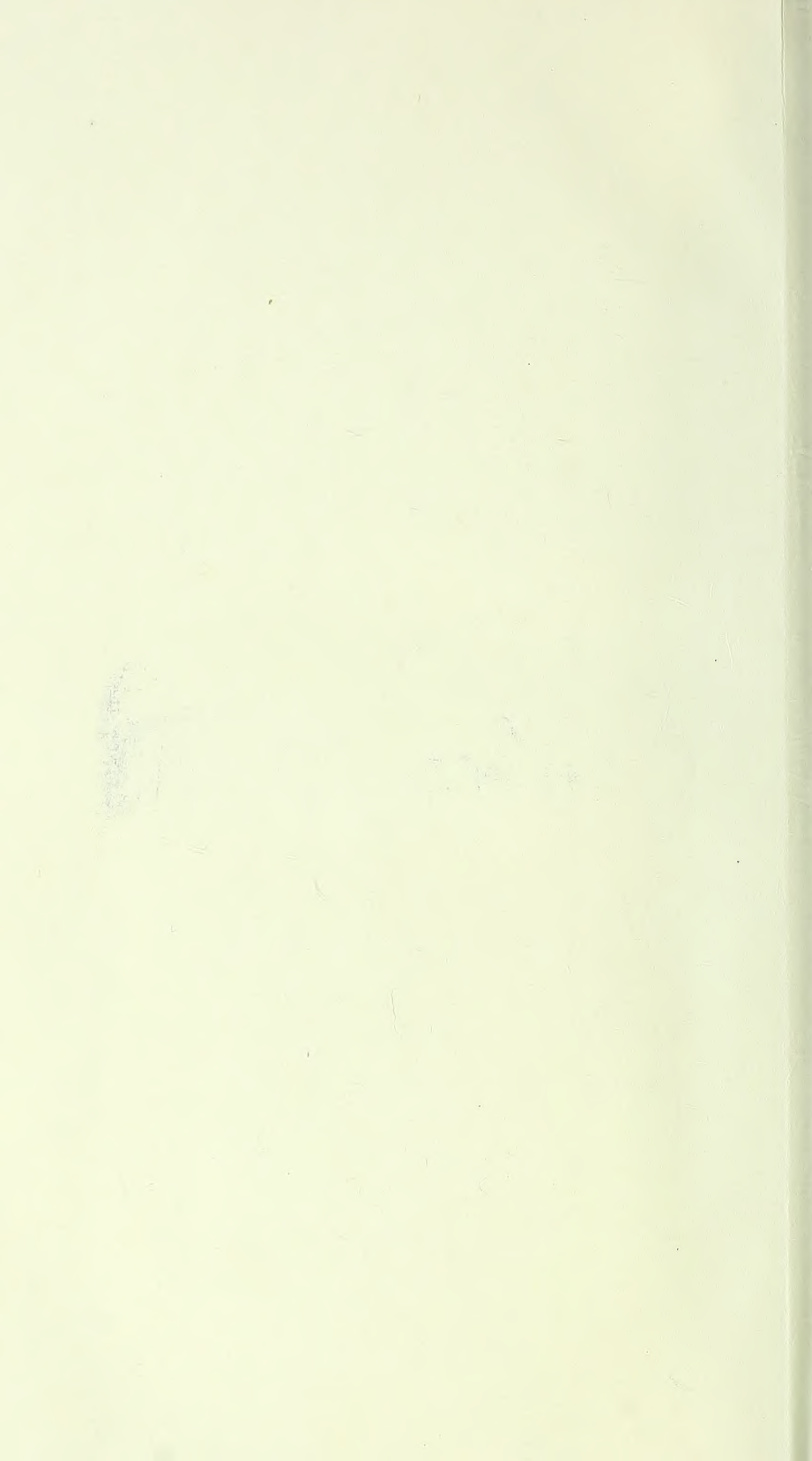














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